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# HISTORY OF OREGON







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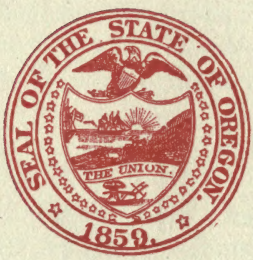
# HISTORY OF OREGON

## THE GROWTH OF AN AMERICAN STATE

BY  
HORACE S. LYMAN

ASSOCIATE BOARD OF EDITORS  
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AND  
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## CHAPTER I

### THE NEW WORLD POWER





WHILE, as we have seen in the preceding volume, the various old world powers were calculating upon the appropriation of the Oregon country, and with it control of the Pacific Ocean, there was in process of gradual development a New World Power, with the character of whose people and political institutions this last great reserve of American territory held a closer affinity. With the rise and development of the United States as a whole, we cannot linger here; the details must be examined in other places; but it is not only proper in this sketch of the growth of one of the most considerable of the territories that have become a part of the original Union, but even necessary to call attention to the rise and beginnings of the Nation itself, and to revive the recollection of the reasons which called it into existence.

The rise and political independence of the United States of America was the most momentous event of the world's history. This is not because that event has led to an aggregation of power that has perhaps outweighed that of any other nation, but because it was in the interest of humanity, and the better application than ever before of ideal conditions to political and industrial life. If it be deemed, as many across the Atlantic, and some even on this side, as but a passing phase of civil development, when owing to natural conditions, and the peculiar relation of political and religious development, a



greater measure of liberty and opportunity could be given to the common people than ever before, and that it must soon and forever pass again to the less liberal conditions of the old world, even then the record should be treasured as of priceless value; as one true, although brief, period when a people numerically weak and industrially backward, still contended for ideal rights, and won them; when the leading and controlling men were so devoted to the public good as to serve the people without reward; when Washington suffered his fortune to 'deteriorate, serving his country without pay, and refused at last to be king to repair what he had lost in advancing the cause of poorer men; when Morris placed his entire private fortune in jeopardy to sustain the credit of the bankrupt treasury; when Arnold was execrated as the one sole example of treachery for mercenary ends, and Lee was found poor enough but still so incorruptible that the king of England was not rich enough to buy him; when the entire company of public men, from Jefferson and Hancock and Franklin and Adams, down the line, definitely limited themselves as under the peoples' liberties, and devised a government that made it difficult for any individual to profit from the unwilling, or even ignorant, service of another.

This is not to say that there was not self-seeking and treachery, and many of man's meaner qualities exposed even then; but these were for the time dominated by greater minds, and motives of a liberal

nature were ever kept to the front—which even now command no less admiration, unless when advanced as a hypocritical claim to excellences that no longer exist. But although suffering change as circumstances change, we may hold that the principles themselves for which the Revolutionary Fathers contended were not for the day; nor the character that they maintained, ephemeral; that public and humane ideas, rather than the personal and mercenary, will continue to animate the greatest, and therefore the controlling minds; and that the principles of the Declaration of Independence, which were set forth more broadly than the writers themselves dared apply them in their day, were not to meet a mere temporary need of the Americans, in order to gain the sympathy of the world, but are destined for universal application.

In their struggle for independence it must ever be borne in mind that the Americans were contending for the rights of Englishmen. They were pre-eminently the believers in the liberal principles of the Magna Charta, of the Protectorate of Cromwell, and of the Revolution of 1688. They had come to America in order to apply these ideas to political affairs, and from the circumstance of their communities had become self-governing. With many limitations the people had still learned “to take a hand in government.” They had learned civil and religious tolerance, and mutual respect from the simple fact that they lived in the wilderness, and must depend upon



one another whatever their political or religious creed. The wilderness and the Indians, and the French on the North and West had come to make ecclesiastical or caste distinctions seem of little practical importance; while distinctions of rank faded into insignificance where none was rich and all must depend upon simple manhood to provide even the primary wants.

The principles which they deemed that they still were entitled to as Englishmen have been stated as follows by a British authority:—"That it was the undoubted right of English subjects, being freemen, or freeholders, to give their property only by their own consent. . . . That taxes were the free gift of the people to their rulers; that the authority of the sovereign was to be exercised only for the good of the subjects: That it was the right of the people to meet together and peaceably consider their grievances, to petition for the redress of them, and finally when grievances were unendurable, to seek relief, on the failure of petitions and remonstrances, by forcible means." . . . These rights of Englishmen they had exercised freely and in their assemblies, or councils, under their colonial charters, and continued to exercise the right of taxation according to their own needs and judgment. Necessary as they deemed a king, and much as they depended upon him for protection, they believed from long experience that the only safety against his tyranny was in maintaining strictly their right to supply

him as they deemed expedient, with money and supplies.

As suggested in the first volume the results of the French and Indian War, giving Canada to England, had united the American colonies, and at the very same moment gave England an opportunity to attempt a limitation of these old rights. Not the English king, in this case, but the English Parliament, deemed that in it, and not in the Colonial assemblies, lay the power to tax the Colonies as Parliament saw fit. An imperial policy was inaugurated; Grenville and Townshend, on the part of the king of England, devised the plan of maintaining three royal armies—one in India, one in Ireland, and the other in America; even in time of peace. It was contended that this was necessary for the security of the empire, and that it was wholly in the interest of America that one army should be stationed here, as the colonies had no fitting protection from the Indians. The right to tax America in the interest of England was not defended; but the right to tax America in the interest of America, was asserted by Parliament. English constitutionalists still maintain that this was within the power of Parliament; but America did not so understand her rights. She could not admit that Parliament should determine what taxation was for her benefit, and held that here was the very marrow of the matter; American Englishmen must determine for themselves, in their local assemblies (which corresponded to Parliament), what their interests re-



quired. They admitted the benefits that they had derived from the French and Indian War, but did not want a British army in America; nor did they think the narrow navigation acts, and the repression of home manufactures—as of iron and hats, etc.—showed an intelligent understanding on the part of Parliament of America's interest.

Finding at last that petition and protest were unavailing, the Americans decided to defend their rights by forcible means and declared the king of England a tyrant, usurper, and enemy; and finally made good their claim. The great body of English historians now admit that the course of the king and Parliament was unwise if not unjust; and the larger part of the English people at the time sympathized with the Americans; members of Parliament publicly announced victories of the Americans as victories of the English people, and believed that subjugation of the colonies was but a preliminary step to serious limitation of the old rights of the English at home.

In making their final break with the king, the Americans advanced the claims which they made for themselves so as to include "all men." This was practically necessary, as thereby the conflict became one of world-wide interest, and not simply a domestic broil among Englishmen; and America must appeal from the king of England to the judgment of the world. The writers of the Declaration of Independence saw this clearly; but in thus stating the doc-

trines rising in France, they also stated their own ideal belief—as is shown in the private writings of Thomas Jefferson. This doctrine has commanded the belief and has controlled the checkered politics of the Americans for over an hundred years, and difficult as has been found its application in the face of race prejudices and changed industrial conditions, the practical application has gained at every political transference of administration, and cannot recede.

Great as is the interest of tracing the fortunes of this ideal of the revolutionary fathers—that “all men are created equal and are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights”—and that “all just government is derived from the consent of the governed”—it cannot be done in this work, except as it is forever cropping out in the idea and acts of the people who occupied Oregon; our inquiry is more closely concerned with the territorial expansion of the people who dared to go before the world on high ideal declarations, and won; and how Oregon was at length brought under the fortunes of the nation which attempted to make of universal application the hard-won rights of one race.

The question of territory seems not to have been thought of at the beginning of the Revolutionary War; or if so, it was kept out of sight. Under the conditions in which the colonies went into the war the matter of territory was calculated only to cause friction and dissension. Under the old patents the vari-



ous land grants extended from the Atlantic across North America—but this was then considered no wider than Mexico. The territory west of New York was not provided for, but the Dutch and English traders bought large tracts, and claimed more than any other. Connecticut was willing to vacate the New York boundaries, but claimed westward along Lake Erie. The claims of Pennsylvania west of the Alleghanies were in conflict with those of Virginia; North Carolina claimed Tennessee.

The lion's share of the territory west of the Alleghanies, however, was going to Virginia; and the course of this great State in a final settlement was worthy of all honor. Shortly before the Revolutionary War Daniel Boone was beginning his settlement in Kentucky. Occupation of these regions was now possible, owing to the dispossession of the French by William Pitt. Soon after arose an Indian war, known as Cresap's, or Dunmore's war. In this the chief character on the Indian side was the famous Logan, an educated and magnanimous man, of Cayuga descent; but who had been made hostile by the wanton murder of his entire family at a distillery by worthless whites who supposed that they were aiding Cresap, who had been sent to check some really hostile bands on the Ohio. Lord Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia, was accused of fomenting this war in order to distract the Americans on the eve of the Revolution, and Logan was elevated to a hero by Thomas Jefferson, who made

public the Indian's celebrated speech. The war was ended by defeat of the Indians on the Great Kanawha, by Andrew Lewis; and the tribes surrendered to Virginia all south of the Ohio. Boone and Harrod settled south of this river in 1775; the name Lexington being given by them to their camping place when they heard of the battle of Lexington.

The Indians north of the Ohio were easily led to support the British. The British general, Hamilton, at Detroit meditated a combination of the Indians of the West to fall upon the American settlements. This was to assist in the invasion by Burgoyne. But upon hearing of the surrender of Burgoyne in 1777 an intelligent and active Virginian devised a plan to completely turn the position of Hamilton. This man was a surveyor by occupation, who had become thoroughly familiar with the Ohio Valley. He had been educated by a Scotchman along with Madison, and must ever be remembered by Americans both for his own sake, and for his relationship to one of Oregon's heroes. This was George Rogers Clark. He is thus picturesquely described by Fiske:—"Clark was a man of bold originality. He had been well educated by that excellent Scotch schoolmaster, Donald Robertson, among whose pupils was James Madison. In 1772 Clark was practicing the profession of land surveyor on the upper Ohio, and he rendered valuable service as a scout in the campaign of the Kanawha. For skill in woodcraft, for indomitable perseverance and courage, he had few equals. He was a man of



picturesque and stately appearance, like an old Norse viking, tall and massive, with ruddy cheeks, auburn hair, and piercing blue eyes sunk deep under thick yellow brows."

Clark's plan was to descend the Ohio, and occupy the British posts of Kaskaskia on the Mississippi, and Vincennes on the Wabash. He proceeded to Virginia and laid the matter before Jefferson, Patrick Henry, then governor, and Wythe and Madison; and although military necessity required secrecy, he was commissioned to raise 350 men, and operate in the West. He succeeded in raising but 180, but with this little force started from Pittsburg in May of 1778, and accomplished successfully his bold enterprise. Both Kaskaskia and Vincennes were completely surprised, and having no English garrison surrendered without resistance. Indeed these posts were inhabited by French, who learning that France was assisting the United States readily adhered to Clark. He used great address in treating with these French people. Vincennes was subsequently taken back by Hamilton, but reoccupied by Clark, the townspeople assisting him in capturing the fort.

The whole territory north of the Ohio and west to the Mississippi passed to Virginia, and the recruiting grounds of the British for Indian allies was broken up.

What to do with this western territory was discussed in the Continental Congress before the war was over. But two days after the surrender of Bur-

goyne, when the prospects of the country holding western territory were much improved, the Maryland delegation introduced a resolution providing that Congress have sole and exclusive right over the territory, to ascertain and fix the boundaries of States claiming west to the Mississippi, and lay out the land beyond the boundary so ascertained into separate and independent States, from time to time, as the numbers and circumstances of the people might require.

This was one of those strong and sensible suggestions that have not failed to appear in American affairs whenever the need has arisen. For the several States to attempt acquisition of territory would have given rise to rivalries that would have speedily led to wars between them. Not to allow for any acquisitions of land would have been to shut the United States between contending European nations and the sea, and have speedily terminated the career of the new power. The Marylanders saw that both dangers could be avoided by simply giving all territory to the general government. After discussion for some time, and as the new territory was acquired by Virginia, and the settlement became more urgent, the resolution was adopted in 1780. The most remarkable thing about this was that such action had no constitutional authority. There was no provision in the articles of Federation allowing the general government to acquire or hold territory. But the Americans wisely concluded that their action was not limit-

ed by omissions that previous experience had not anticipated, and that they had the power to meet the requirements of the case as necessity arose. The precedent, or possibly the principle, was thus early established, that the necessity of the case, and the wisdom of the act, may allow action not specifically stated in the written constitution. This served Jefferson in 1803, and Lincoln sixty years later, when he emancipated the slaves.

The young States, one by one, adopted the resolution of Congress. Connecticut turned over to the general government the "Western Reserve," retaining certain portions for educational purposes. Virginia surrendered all her new territory except Kentucky, and this in 1784. Massachusetts surrendered all her claims, extending across Michigan, in the next year. The action of Virginia was considered most conspicuously wise and patriotic. The immense territory gained by war and settlement of her own people made her paramount among the States, and gave her a standing that might have subjected all the rest to her. But Jefferson, especially, saw that the true greatness was to be national rather than local, and entered with the utmost zeal in transferring the territory to the general government. Indeed his enthusiasm was so great that he drew up a measure dividing this territory into ten States, and finding names for them built on some Latin principle, which were wisely allowed to lapse. His plan was not accepted, the wiser course proving to let the communities grow



and form their own governments, and even find their own names; but the memorable thing about Jefferson's plan was that the institution of slavery should not exist in those States after the year 1800. This shows to how great an extent the movement was of moral interest. Jefferson, as shown by his correspondence, believed in the principle of self-government for all men, and "trembled for his country" in view of slavery, when he remembered that God was just; but still predicted that the white and black race could not live together in freedom.

In 1787 Congress passed the ordinance creating the Northwest Territory, which was to be under the direct government of Congress "in such mode and for such time as Congress shall judge proper." This ordinance provided that slavery or involuntary servitude should not exist here, and this for more than half a century was the distinguishing feature of the ordinance; but even of greater import was the provision for a territorial form of government, making provision for government where statehood was not yet possible, and showing the intent of the American people to acquire territory as needed for national growth. This more than any one thing elevated the United States to the National Idea—which subsequently became powerful enough to eliminate slavery entirely from the soil of America.

Colonization followed; or rather we should say, settlement. Americans have never been colonizers; but "settlers." In no American community will the

people speak of this "colony"—unless in some scheme of European origin; but always of the "settlement." The latter name is the American term, and implies an independence, and self-direction and choice not associated with the name colony.

By receiving the territory west of the Alleghanies the United States became rich in land—bankrupt in all other wealth—and then even lacking the power of taxation. It was therefore proposed by Israel Putnam that a company be formed and the soldiers be paid off in Western lands for their services. This was done, and the Western Reserve and Ohio Valley were soon occupied by American families, forever ending the rule there of both barbarian and commercial trader. Europe stood aghast as she saw the swarming army of civilization crossing the Alleghanies and taking possession in the name of free government, westward to the Father of Waters.

That this is not an overstatement is perfectly clear from the efforts made by France and Spain to limit the territorial growth of America, upon the close of the Revolution—which must be briefly alluded to here. After Yorktown and the fall of North's ministry, negotiations for peace were undertaken, the party friendly to America having come into power in England. The object of France in assisting America had been, on the part of the government, simply to humiliate and weaken England. Now that this was done she sought how, in the treaty of peace, to serve her own advantage. Her territorial pretensions in

America had not been entirely extinguished by the results of 1763; she had ceded Louisiana, west of the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, to Spain, secretly, to avoid yielding it to England; but no doubt intended to take it again whenever able. She had sent La Perouse to explore the Pacific Coast. She intended, evidently, to gain through the Mississippi—and afterwards, as indicated by the voyage of La Perouse, by the Columbia—all that she had lost through the St. Lawrence. But having, as she supposed, effectually checked England, it became just as necessary to limit the United States. The Americans must be stopped at the crest of the Alleghany Mountains.

In Spain she found the same sentiment. In 1782 Count Aranda wrote to his king the memorable words in regard to the United States: “This federal republic is born a pigmy. A day will come when it will be a giant, even a colossus, formidable in these countries. Liberty of conscience, the facility of establishing a new population in immense lands, as well as the advantages of a new government, will draw thither farmers and artisans from all nations. In a few years we shall watch with grief the tyrannical existence of this same colossus.”

When the question of western territory and boundary of the United States was reached, therefore, the American commissioners, for a treaty of peace, Franklin, Adams, and John Jay, were astonished to find France, their former friend and ally, a



virtual enemy. Vergennes, French commissioner, proposed that the territory north of the Ohio be restored to Great Britain, and that west of the Alleghanies, south of that river and west to the Mississippi, be reserved as an Indian territory, and be under joint control of the United States and Spain. Franklin could hardly bring himself to act otherwise than openly with Vergennes, who was scrupulous to fulfill all the letter of the old treaty with the United States. But Jay, seeing that this limitation could not be borne, secured a secret understanding with the British Government, carrying the American boundary to the Mississippi. Here again good fortune—or perhaps we might better say, a Providence favorable to free government—attended America. The victory of Rodney over De Grasse in the West Indies, and also of the British at Gibraltar, leaving our former enemy mistress of the seas, made it impossible for France and Spain to antagonize America, and very desirable to conclude peace with England. The secret treaty was then ratified, and the old Bourbon monarchies, as well as the Georges of England, saw the pigmy moving westward with the steps of the predicted colossus.

During this moment of uncertainty the figure of George Rogers Clark again looms up. He held unflinchingly the territory that he had taken. The estimate placed upon this heroic figure by John Fiske may be quoted here. He says: "In the gallery of our national heroes Clark deserves a conspicuous and

honorable place. It was due to his boldness and sagacity that when our commissioners at Paris in 1782 were engaged in their difficult and delicate work of thwarting our not too friendly French ally, while arranging terms of peace with the British enemy, the fortified posts of the Mississippi and Wabash were held to the American domain." He was also an efficient connecting link between the revolutionary times and the Oregon period, giving practical effect to the large ideas of Jefferson. Fiske thus speaks of the close of his life: "Clark's last years were spent in poverty and obscurity at his sister's house near Louisville, where he died in 1818. It was his younger brother, William Clark, who in company with Merriwether Lewis, made the famous expedition to the Columbia River, in 1804, thus giving the United States a hold upon Oregon."





## CHAPTER II

JOHN LEDYARD



WHILE the Americans as a body were winning their independence, and making their way westward as need required, there was coming up one of those erratic characters in which

America has abounded, and whose native tendencies toward irregularity are only stimulated to grow to indefinite proportions in the liberal conditions afforded by a wilderness continent. This was John Ledyard of Connecticut, who appears to have had but one passion, or at least one solace for the relief of his other contending passions—and that was the solace of the Indian—that of wandering. A quaint, gentle, humane, humorous sort of a fellow, the excursions he took over the world were the same sort of mental relief as that afforded to Thoreau in psychological experimentation or to Emerson in speculative philosophy. Ledyard was of the same order of mind, but required physical as well as mental transitions, and was incapable of definite results in any field but that of adventure. He undertook study only to be quietly passed around by professors and divines; and business only to fail; and even he essayed the flowery fields of domestic affection, or love, only to add fuel to his passion for wandering. Yet this irregular life accomplished, without any purpose on the part of Ledyard, the greatest services to Oregon; and we must allow space here for some detail of these services. He was wont to speak of himself humorously, as one “damned to fame,” and it is of inter-



est to Oregon that one thus consecrated should be included among her benefactors. But the interest is more than personal or incidental. In the story of Oregon one finds the same sort of chance character repeated over and over so many times, and the world wanderer appearing on the scene just in the nick of time so often, that he almost believes it was a story made up beforehand, or becomes superstitious that some controlling Influence was subtly at work weaving in the characters as the events required. The real philosophical fact probably is that in no country as in America has there been a greater number of inquisitive minds coupled with an active body, and the love of adventure and mystery has worked them out of the older communities and sent them roaming even as far west as Oregon.

John Ledyard was a native of Connecticut, being born at Groton in 1751. His mother was early left a widow, but was very desirous that her son should have all the best advantages, and especially that he should go to college and enter the ministry. He was an wholly amiable young man, and to the end of his life was very open to any friendly suggestions. At the age of 21 he was at Dartmouth College, a school under Dr. Wheelock, which was opened especially with reference to training Indian youths. From this went some of the finest influences of the West, sending missionaries to the Indians of New York, who succeeded, perhaps, in saving some of the remnants of the Iroquois. It is of interest especially to Ore-

gonians, as some of the early educators of Oregon were from Dartmouth. Ledyard began theological study, expecting to become a missionary to the Indians; but his innocent irregularities nonplussed the college authorities. He once disappeared for several months, and gave no account of himself, though it was charitably considered that he had spent the time with the Indians in order to prepare himself for work among them. But his studies made little progress, and along in the spring it was found that he was spending his time constructing a canoe in the woods.

There was hardly time to remonstrate before he had set out on a voyage down the Connecticut, taking but two books; one of which was the Greek Testament. While reading this, and floating leisurely down the river, being wholly unacquainted with its course, he was all but carried over the cataract at Bellows' Falls. He finished his journey safely, and in due time astonished his relatives by arriving in his quaint craft on the bank of the river near their home. His amiable wish to satisfy the aspirations of his mother, and readiness to fall in with any good suggestion, led him to take up the study of theology with various ministers, and we find in all his writings and letters curious speculations derived from this source; but no minister seems to have been willing to vouch for him for ordination—not, as it seems, from any ill-conduct, or even for any unsound theology, but from irregularity of methods and lack of thorough preparation.

After some months here and there on Long Island and in Connecticut Ledyard found a ship and sailed with a Captain Deshon for Gibraltar, returning in a year. The impulse then seized him to sail to England and meet some relatives in Plymouth, who were in good circumstances and through whom he hoped to be introduced to better opportunities than in America. This was easy, as he was now an able seaman, and could find passage on any ship. Arriving in the world capital he went at once to meet his relatives with a *sang froid* that but thinly veiled his natural sensitiveness. Being admitted he was greeted by one of the young men, who, upon being given the name, bluntly, and probably without the intention of giving offense, asked for proof of his relationship. By this Ledyard felt himself so much hurt that he instantly turned on his heel and left the premises; nor even after the older relative wished to take up the acquaintance, would he return.

He was in great need, and wandered about London suffering from actual want; but learning of the expedition of Captain Cook to the South Sea and the Northwest Coast, offered his services, and was accepted as corporal of marines. Here he found another American, John Gore, of Virginia, who was third in command, and owing to the death of both Cook and Clerke, became commander before the voyage ended. Gore is spoken of highly as a capable and intrepid officer, who remained until death in the English service.



Then came the long voyage, beginning July, 1776, coasting New Holland, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand, in the early months of the next year, and reaching Nootka in the spring of the same. Seeing that from this eventful voyage arose not only the efforts and discoveries of the British, described in the first volume, but also the trade and discoveries of the Americans in the Pacific and on the Northwest Coast, it will be necessary to give some account of what Ledyard saw here, although this is some years before the discoveries of Vancouver.

The one study which interested Ledyard most of any was mankind, and he seems to have had a sort of system of classification to which he almost unconsciously referred all the tribes with whom he came in contact. It was with intense interest that after having spent some time away from his native America that he now approached its shores, although on the western side and from the other quarter of the world. He thus describes his feelings, and what first attracted his attention, the Indians:—"All the early emotions incident to natural attachment and early prejudices played around my heart, and I indulged them. I no sooner beheld these Americans [the Indians] than I set them down for the same kind of people that inhabit the opposite side of the continent. They are rather above the middle stature, copper colored, and of an athletic make. They have long black hair which they generally wear in a club on the top of the head. They fill it when dressed with oil, paint,

and the down of birds. They also paint their faces with red, blue, and white colors, but from where they had them, or how they were prepared, they would not inform us, nor could we tell. Their clothing generally consists of skins, but they had two other sorts of garments; the one is made of the inner rind of some sort of bark twisted and united together like the woof of our coarse cloth; the other very strongly reminds me of the New Zealand Toga, and is also principally made with the hair of their dogs, which are usually white and of the domestic kind. Upon the garment is displayed, very well executed, the manner of their catching the whale; we saw nothing so well done by a savage in our travels.

“ Their garments of all kinds are worn mantle-wise, and the borders of them are fringed, or terminated with some particular kind of ornament. Their richest skins, when converted to garments, are edged with a great curiosity. This is nothing less than the very species of wampum so well known on the opposite side of the continent. It is identically the same; and this wampum was not only found among all the aborigines now on this side of the continent, but even exists unmutilated on the opposite coast of North Asia. We saw them make use of no covering for the feet or legs, and it was seldom they covered the head. When they did it was with a kind of basket covering, much after the manner and form of the Chinese and the Chinese Tartars' hats.

“ Their language is very guttural, and if it were

possible to reduce it to an orthography it would very much abound in consonants. In their manners they very much resemble the other aborigines of North America. They are bold and ferocious, shy and reserved; not easily provoked, but revengeful; we saw no sign of religion or a worship among them; and if they sacrifice, it is to the god of liberty."—The most of the above observations are quite correct, unless the last. The Indians had a very distinct religion and observed forms of worship, but were too "shy and reserved" to speak of these things to strangers.

Besides the interest he felt in the natives Ledyard was at once impressed with the possibilities of trade in the furs of this coast. It became, indeed, later, the ruling purpose of his life to promote the trade. It is said by his biographer, Jared Sparks, "Ledyard's views of the commercial resources of Nootka Sound, and other parts of the Northwest Coast, must not be overlooked in this place, because they were the foundation of many important succeeding events in his life, in suggesting to him the benefits of trafficking voyages to this coast. It will be seen that he was the first, whether in Europe or America, to propose such a voyage as a mercantile enterprise." Ledyard himself thus describes the coast in this view, remarking:—"The light in which this country appears most to advantage respects the variety of its animals, and the richness of their furs. They have foxes, sables, hares, deer, moose, dogs, otters, beavers, wolves, and



a species of weazels called the glutton. The skins of this animal were sold at Kamchatka, a Russian factory on the Asiatic coast, for sixty rubles, which is near twelve guineas, and had it been sold in China it would have been worth thirty guineas. We purchased while here about 1,500 beavers, besides other skins, but took none but the best, having no thought at that time of using them to any other advantage than converting them to purposes of clothing; but it afterwards happened that skins which did not cost the purchaser six pence sterling sold in China for \$100. Neither did we purchase a quarter part of the beaver and other fur skins we might have done, and most certainly should have done, had we known of making the opportunity of disposing of them to such an astonishing profit."

After passing from Nootka and touching at Unalaska Ledyard undertook the dangerous task of seeking out who were the white men, the marks of whose presence somewhere on the island were apparent among the natives. He volunteered, and went alone with the Indian guides, by whom he was very considerately treated—seeming everywhere to have an affinity with Indians. He found the establishment at length, which proved to be that of Russians, and by them he was welcomed and treated to a feast. He was struck with the fine appearance of the men, though it was impossible to converse except by signs. He was also treated to a hearty meal, but of so much fat meat and fish that together with the hospitable

but great heat of a stove, and the close air, he fainted before the evening was over—much to the concern of the trappers; but was quite able to return to the ship the next day. In August of the same year he looked upon Bering's Straits and the Arctic Ocean; being with the expedition still as it traced the American coast to an icy barrier. In November he was with Cook at the Hawaiian Islands, and gives the only clear account of the death of the brave but not always considerate commander. Indeed he regarded Cook as unwarrantably harsh on many occasions with the natives; and his punishment for stealing, which was not regarded as a crime, by them, as calculated to stir up ill-will. In the case of the broil which cost Cook his life it seems that the English sailors were taking for wood the posts and timbers of a native house of worship; which caused a commotion, and Cook was attempting to get the old chief on board the ship, with the intention of keeping him as a hostage. This was resisted, and being attacked Cook fired a blank shot, which doing no damage emboldened his savage assailant to brandish his shield and show his comrades that he could not be hurt by smoke. Then followed the rush in which the powerful form of one of England's greatest sailors was overborne.

Ledyard continued with the expedition, visiting Kamchatka, and exploring the Asiatic shore of the Arctic in the summer of the next year; returning to England in 1780.

He kept a journal of the voyage, and is remembered by Burney as an enthusiastic, but rather florid writer; who entered into the competition for place as historian of the voyage; but was not successful. His journal was taken by the English authorities, and not published. He thereupon entered the English navy, and asked for service which should not make him fight the Americans; but in 1782 was transferred to the American squadron. In December of that year he was at Huntington Bay, Long Island, in a region every foot of which was known to his earlier life. The opportunity to step ashore, and not go back, soon occurred, and he was soon an American patriot, and lodged in the boarding house that he found his mother keeping. The experience of Dr. Franklin was not repeated in his case, as the mother knew her son, though so long separated and in foreign garb, and wholly unexpected. His idiosyncrasy is well shown in the following letter to a friend, speaking of his circumstances. "You will be surprised," he writes, "at my being at Hartford. I am surprised myself. I made my escape from the British at Huntington Bay. I am now at Mr. Seymour's and as happy as need be. I have a little cash, two coats, three waist coats, six pair of stockings, and half a dozen ruffled shirts. I am a violent whig and a violent Tory. Many are my acquaintances. I eat and drink when I am asked, and visit when I am invited. In short I generally do as I am bid. All I want of my friends is friendship; possessed of that I am happy."



Although thus enjoying the pleasures of visiting and dining out and wearing silk stockings and ruffled shirts, the young traveler was doing more than entertain his friends at the evening fireside. He spent the early part of the year 1783 in writing from memory an account of his wonderful voyage, of which the world was anxiously waiting the full recital; though a short statement had been prepared and was published in England. Ledyard made use of this to verify his dates and refresh his memory, though his work was essentially original. This was published in the summer of 1783, the work being completed in May. It can scarcely be doubted that the most of the interest in trade in furs on the Northwest Coast that soon rose in America dated to Ledyard's accounts; nor can it be doubted that these efforts led to conclusive results in securing Oregon to the United States.

But Ledyard was just on the line between the man of thought and observation, who is content when he has perceived and stated a truth or fact, to let others work it out to its practical results, and the man of action who knows of opportunity only to fling himself into prosecution of its chances. After giving the world the fruits of his experiences Ledyard was seized with the purpose to prosecute the wonderful opening that he had found. He therefore made it his business to work up an enterprise, get a company formed, secure a ship and go into fur trading from Nootka direct to China. Until the summer of 1786

he pursued this plan with unflagging zeal, but was ever so open to the suggestion of friends, who were ever offering some new and distant prospect, that his quest seemed little more than the pursuit of chimeras. If he had simply camped with his proposition at Boston he would within a few years have been able to realize his object. But this was not his disposition, and he therefore became again a world wanderer. He was so often within grasp of his cherished purpose that the record of his disappointments would be pathetic were it not that he bore them with so much good nature and even drollery.

He first attempted to interest the American financier, Robert Morris, who gave him some encouragement, so that he went to the various ports in search of a ship. An American vessel at Boston, and a French ship at New London were successively engaged, but gave up the enterprise. With another gentleman he was authorized to purchase a proper vessel at New York; but at this juncture Morris seems to have withdrawn his interest, and the season was spent without results. At New London he found his old friend Deshon, nephew of his old captain, and all but persuaded him to try a venture on the North Pacific Coast. Deshon afterwards admitted that he made a great mistake in not doing so, as his would have been the first ship in the trade, and his profits must have been enormous. But being rather a cool fellow, he distrusted the ardor of Ledyard, and concluded to let well enough alone.

Probably seeing that the disposition of Americans, and even of his personal friends, was to discount his reports, Ledyard determined to try his success in Europe, and June of 1784 sailed for Cadiz, Spain. It was this very year that Kendrick, a cool-headed Boston skipper, was preparing to set sail for Nootka. Whether he had obtained his suggestions from Ledyard may not be known, but as the latter was in every port proposing his enterprise to all sorts of men, it can hardly be doubted.

In Europe Ledyard met with the same sort of success; of interesting men who gave him the slip afterwards, and in one case at least only learned what he knew to attempt the plan on their own account. He went to Brest, where Lieutenant Quimper became interested in the Northwest. Proceeding to L'Orient he succeeded in interesting a French house, and a ship was procured to sail in October; but the plan was suddenly changed after all was ready to start in February of 1785. He then determined to go on to Paris, where there were many Americans, and try to avail himself of their good offices. He there met Thomas Jefferson. Of the importance of this meeting his biographer says:—"To a Statesman like Mr. Jefferson it was evident that a large portion of that immense territory, separated from the United States by no barrier of nature, would be eventually embraced within their territory [of the United States]. He was convinced, therefore, of the propriety of its being explored by a citizen of the United States, and



regretted the failure of Ledyard's attempts in his own country to engage in a voyage before the same thing had been meditated anywhere else. These views were deeply impressed on the mind of Jefferson, and in them originated the journey of Lewis and Clark, twenty years afterwards, which was projected by him, and prosecuted under his auspices."

Precisely how much of Jefferson's interest in Oregon is to be attributed to the information that he obtained from Ledyard may not be known; there is evidence that he had already thought of an exploring party across the continent; but it could not but have been much increased and brought to a more definite focus. Besides Jefferson, Ledyard met other distinguished men at the French capital, Lamb and Barclay, the Marquis La Fayette, and John Paul Jones being among the number. With the latter, the American naval hero, he made an agreement to undertake a voyage to the North Pacific, to which Jones was much inclined; but finally abandoned the enterprise, or postponed it, on account of arranging for prize money and its collection. It seems also that the French Government made some encouraging offers, but only with the purpose of gaining information, and despatching the expedition of La Perouse, as noticed in Volume I. A plan was also proposed for a great fur trading company, to be founded with French capital, with the leading emporium at Baltimore. But, as has been seen elsewhere, the expedition of La Pe-

rouse gained no practical results; and the great fur company seems also to have come to nothing.

That Ledyard was not a mere visionary, without practical ideas, is shown by the plan that was worked out with Paul Jones. According to this he agreed to sail with Jones, and spend the first six months on the coast in collecting furs, and look out a suitable place to establish a post, either on the mainland or on an island. A small vessel was then to be built, in which Ledyard was to be left with a surgeon and twenty soldiers; one of the vessels was to be despatched with a cargo of furs to China, under command of Jones, while the other was to remain in order to facilitate the collection of furs for another cargo during his absence. Jones was to return with both the vessels to China, sell their cargo of furs, load them with silks and teas, and continue his voyage around the Cape of Good Hope to Europe or the United States. He was then to replenish his vessels with suitable articles for the Indian trade, and proceed as expeditiously as possible around Cape Horn to the Pacific. Meanwhile Ledyard and his party were to occupy themselves with purchasing furs, cultivate a good understanding with the natives, and make such discoveries on the coast as their circumstances would allow. Ledyard proposed that he would himself return by land across North America—settling the geographical questions then unsolved.

The method of trade here outlined was precisely the course that Americans actually found most prac-

ticable, and the land journey anticipated that of Lewis and Clark by twenty years. One sees here no impracticality except that common to men of genius—of attempting alone and on the instant what actually requires the lives of many patient plodders. However, Ledyard all but accomplished his task.

He was treated with great kindness by Jefferson, and indeed by all the Americans, who delicately provided the means that he wholly lacked, and made him no inconspicuous part of their brilliant society—the like of whom has hardly been seen again on this planet; men of such remarkable vitality and humanity, with such universal ideas, and withal so combining such a high degree of worldly polish and refinement, with such sternly democratic principles. It was here that Ledyard was wont to speak humorously of his ill-success with his ventures, and apply to himself the phrase used in regard to Oliver Cromwell, “damned to fame.”

On the failure of the scheme with Jones, which laid in ruins the great plans constructed during four months, he was taken into Jefferson’s confidence. This great statesman mentions him in his correspondence very favorably, saying: “In 1786, while at Paris, I became acquainted with John Ledyard, of Connecticut, a man of genius, of some science, and of fearless courage and enterprise.” Jefferson proposed, seeing all the ventures by sea had failed, that he go to Russia, obtain permission to cross Siberia to Kamchatka, and find his way across the north-



ern Pacific, and "fall down to the latitude of the great river," as indicated on French maps, and cross the continent to the United States. This cannot but be considered a very ill-advised proposition, and certain to run a man like Ledyard into serious trouble. But, then as ever ready to take any suggestion, he at once adopted it.

The rest of the story is short. Ledyard reached St. Petersburg, having walked around the Gulf of Bothnia in the snow; he reached Moscow in mid-winter, finally, without shoes. He was unable to obtain a passport to cross Siberia, but although penniless and almost destitute of clothing made the attempt without this. So impressed was Jefferson with the supposition that he would never have risked going without a passport that he stated in his introduction to Lewis and Clark's journals, that he had one which was withdrawn; but twenty-six years later corrected his error. Ledyard had nearly reached Kamchatka, when he was overtaken by a company sent to arrest him, placed in a close carriage, and transported back to the border of Poland, where he was released on the order not to return to the Empire. Shortly after he engaged to head an expedition to Egypt, and explore the sources of the Nile; but in Africa contracted a fever of which he died. Jefferson writing to Madison in 1788 says that Ledyard promised him that if he returned from Egypt he would go to Kentucky and penetrate across the continent to the South Sea.

While Jefferson, who was always open and honest, does not tell us precisely how much he owes to Ledyard, it can scarcely be doubted that in the three years of his acquaintance, and with the Northwest Coast and its wealth uppermost in all their conversations, this master mind, who actually shaped the geography of the nation as no other one has ever done, obtained a large share of his information which enabled him to bring to a successful issue the purpose that he seems to have cherished even before the Revolutionary War was well over. Ledyard therefore deserves a place among the Oregon heroes that seems not hitherto to have been given him.

## CHAPTER III

### AMERICANS IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN



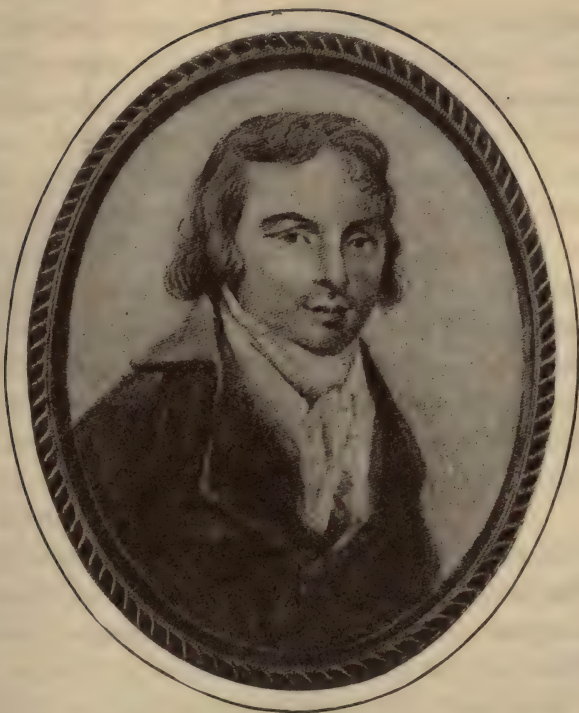


**I**N this chapter will be described the first of what may be called the "Stampedes" for the Pacific Coast. It was of small proportions compared with the others which followed; the much greater one of '49 to '53, to the gold fields of California coming as the second. The first, however, although entirely by sea, was of very much the same character in its object and methods. It was commercial, with the object of making money, and after acquiring a fortune to return home and enjoy it. Any political results or acquisition of territory, or establishing of new commonwealths were at least secondary, if considered at all. Yet political and social results necessarily followed, and the benefit of the commercial enterprises went to the countries whose citizens engaged in the enterprises.

The Americans emerged from the Revolutionary War bitterly poor, both individually and nationally; but they had succeeded in throwing off the restrictions which had been laid upon industry, and were ready to begin an industrial era on as great a scale as their political ideas made possible. Even before the war the Massachusetts men, particularly of Nantucket, had engaged in sealing and whaling around Cape Horn. In this they had been encouraged by the British Government, which was in constant dispute with Spain as to the rights of her subjects in the South Sea. The cod fisheries off Newfoundland had also engaged her people, and at the North

these two lines of enterprise were quickly resumed. In the forests of Maine was an almost inexhaustible store of pine which waited only the skill of the mechanic to float on the seas to the ends of the earth. America was rich in shipbuilders and seamen, and it was an easy matter for any group of men, whether with or without capital, to form a company, build a ship, and follow the whale, or gather up the harvest of cod and mackerel. The hardihood and daring of the people of the young republic, who thus set out on voyages measured by thousands of miles, and two or three years of time, while their wives kept alight the family fire and wove garments while watching at the window for their return, has seldom had a parallel. The necessity of the Northerners to go outside of their own boundaries in order to get subsistence for their families and support a State, arose from the comparatively infertile character of the soil. At the South the same energy was displayed, but took the form of farming and planting. Tobacco was still the staple crop of the South, though Maryland, and to some extent Virginia, engaged in grain raising; Washington's flour business is well known. As the result of their seafaring, the men of the North coursed over the oceans, and visited all shores; and as a result of their planting the men of the South, especially under the slave system, which brought about a division of the whites into the rich and the poor, became the mother of colonists, or "squatters"—the poor of the South learning to hate slavery and





ROBERT HASWELL

Third Mate of the Sloop "Washington."



to seek, as they were able, little homes of their own in the mountains, and at the Great West.

The Northern men, with their ships, were the first to reach the coast of Oregon. Besides whaling, trading to China was undertaken. A ship, the "Empress of China," is said to have entered Canton in 1784—the first from New York, or any American port. By 1787 as many as five American vessels were in this trade—making the way by the Cape of Good Hope. The captain of one of them, Reed, astonished the people of Canton by arriving while the northeast monsoon was still blowing; he had shown the daring of an old navigator by simply sailing east below Tasmania, until he could take the trade on his beam, and thus discovered a new sailing route.

But it was soon apparent to the American merchants that the route around Africa was not the most profitable; especially as in obtaining a cargo in China—consisting for the most part of tea, for which the Americans had become thirsty after the Revolutionary War—it was necessary to take out a large amount of ready money. For long voyages this was very uneconomical, and when the abundance of furs on the Northwest Coast became known, the point was at once seen. Instead of taking specie to China ships could be loaded with goods for Indian traffic—such as iron scrap and trinkets—sail to Nootka, obtain a cargo of furs, sail to China, take on a cargo of teas, silks, and nankeens in exchange for the



furs, and then return home by the Cape of Good Hope.

The following merchants became interested in the new enterprise—as stated by Rev. Edward C. Porter, of Boston:—Joseph Barrel, of Boston, a merchant of distinction; Charles Bullfinch, a recent graduate of Harvard; Samuel Brown, a merchant; John Derby, a shipmaster of Salem; Captain Crowell Hatch, of Cambridge, and John Marden Pintard, of the New York house of Lewis, Pintard and Co. Barrel and Bullfinch seem to have been the leading spirits of the enterprise, and it is said that they used to meet at the house of Dr. Bullfinch, father of Charles, in Bowdoin Square, and read together the account of Cook's voyage, published in 1784; and Barrel would always conclude "Here is a rich harvest for those who go in first." While the book of Cook's voyage is mentioned it is hardly possible that Ledyard's account could have been overlooked; or it hardly seems that Ledyard himself could not have been seen by some of these men as he went from port to port in 1783 looking for a ship. Probably like Deshon these careful men thought the adventurer was overdrawing and waited to see the official account.

The Boston company was formed; the "Columbia," a full-rigged ship of 212 tons burden, built by James Briggs at Hobart's Landing, near Scituate, was bought; being half man-of-war in construction, having two decks and mounting ten guns. Her full

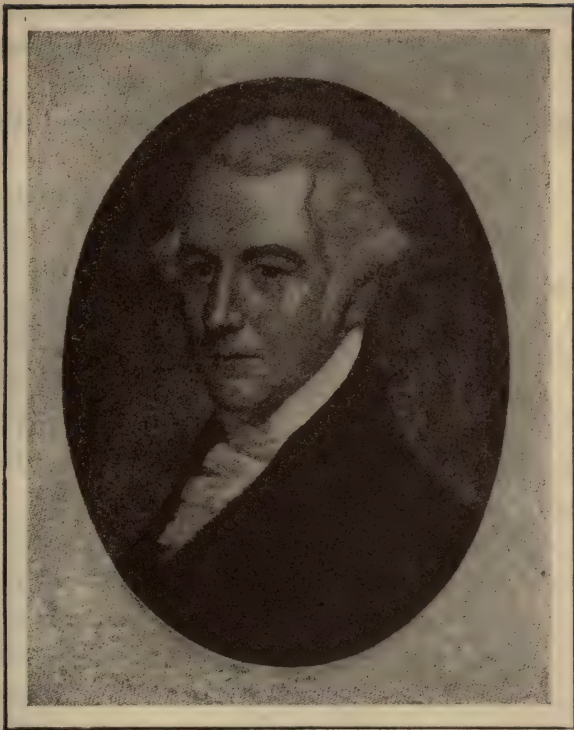
name was "Columbia Rediviva"—the last term indicating the patriotic feeling of the promoters that Columbia—America—was alive again. Their enterprise, indeed, was one of the best signs of this. As a consort the sloop "Washington"—"Lady Washington"—was purchased, being of but ninety tons burden. It is significant that now, after more than an hundred years, the names of these two Yankee ships should live on every tongue, one as the name of the great river, and the other as that of the great State.

As commander of the expedition Captain John Kendrick was selected; a man of forty-five, with a home at Wareham, and family of six children. He had been an American patriot, and commander of a privateer during the war. He took command of the "Columbia." As commander of the sloop was Robert Gray, an officer in the American navy during the Revolution, a native of Rhode Island, and a descendant of Plymouth colonists. He was unmarried until 1794; but marrying later left a family of five children. Other officers of this expedition were Simon Woodruff, Joseph Ingraham, Robert Haswell, and J. Nutting. Haswell was journalist of the voyage, and Nutting was astronomer, or schoolmaster, as commonly styled, who taught the seamen in nautical science as well as making calculations. The ship was well fitted out, supplied with scrap iron for native trade, and many medals of copper, bronze, and pewter, for distribution among the chiefs. A medal-

lion was also struck, having the names of the promoters on one side, and a picture of the ships with Captain Kendrick's name on the other.

Sea letters were obtained from both the Federal and State Governments, and sail was set September 30, 1787. At the Cape Verde Islands a delay of two months occurred, and a black boy was taken aboard as roustabout, whose indiscretion afterwards caused great trouble. At the Falklands harbor was also made, and Kendrick was of a mind to remain over there until the next season, as so much time had been lost; but finally decided to let go. His apprehensions were realized, however, though not to a disastrous degree; violent storms were encountered, and the vessels were separated after passing Cape Horn, not to meet until both had made Nootka Sound. On August 2, 1788, the "Washington," under Gray, sighted Cape Mendocino, and here had a friendly greeting from Indians dressed in deerskins, coming out in a canoe. In latitude 44 degrees they found "The entrance to a large river, where great commercial advantages might be reaped." This is the exact latitude of the Siuclaw; somewhat farther south is the Umpqua, which might perhaps be called a "large river" where it meets the ocean. That Gray should call either of these, however, "large" comes forth in great contrast to the assertions of Vancouver and Meares, the former coldly speaking of the Columbia itself as insignificant or "a mere brook," and "unworthy of notice." But this, the





**JOSEPH BARRELL**

**A Boston merchant who with others bore the expenses of the exploring expedition  
of Captain Robert Gray.**



first appreciative word of our Oregon coast as offering something worthy of attention, shows that a new sort of mind and a new man had been found. We are led to expect that something will be accomplished by him.

We shall see that the period of timidity was indeed past. Gray stood in toward every shore, and entered many harbors that the Spanish and English reported barred with solid lines of breakers, and found harbors where they saw nothing but a blank straight shore, and unbroken mountain walls. At the river in 44 degrees the Americans had no friendly greeting. The Indians appeared and shook their spears. Sailing north they found near Cape Lookout a "tolerably commodious harbor." This was probably Netarts Bay, or perhaps Tillamook Bay. That they entered, and called the harbor anything comfortable at all, shows that at first sight the American explorers and merchants saw what has since been found entirely practicable, that more than half a dozen "tolerably commodious" harbors exist on the Oregon coast; some of them, such as Coos and Yaquina, have become respectable ports. It is safe to say that if no other harbors had been found the Americans could have done a fairly good business in Oregon. At this point they were treated at first very hospitably by the Indians, who brought them berries and boiled crabs, which were very much appreciated by the crew, now suffering somewhat from scurvy. But a bloody conflict was brought on



by the carelessness of the colored boy, Marcos. A party was sent ashore to cut grass for the animals on board, and Marcos thoughtlessly left his saber sticking in the sand, which an Indian seeing coveted and attempted to take. Marcos tried to recover it, but was overpowered by many Indians, and killed. The white men barely escaped to the ship, where Gray with but two others had remained aboard. Some of the Indians were shot. From such unfortunate and heedless acts date much of the hatreds of the Indians. They were thieves, but usually if an article was stolen and redress asked of the chief, and a present given him, it would be returned. Many of the Americans, as well as the English, made everlasting enmities by treating theft as a high crime, and unmercifully punishing it without regard to the authority of the chiefs.

Passing the mouth of the Columbia at some distance, and not seeing it, Clioquot Sound was reached on August 16; and Nootka entered soon after. At the latter they were welcomed by the Englishmen, Meares and Douglas, who sent a boat out to meet the sail, supposing it an Englishman. The small schooner, the "Northwest America," was launched soon after by Meares and Douglas—which was afterwards seized by the Spanish, and used by them for two years. A week later Gray was rejoiced to see the "Columbia," with Kendrick, arriving; though she had suffered on the voyage, having been obliged to put into a port on the coast of Chili, and having

lost three men by scurvy—with others sick of the same plague of the old sailor's life. By the Spanish commandant at Juan Fernandez, Gonzales, Kendrick was well treated, being supplied with all he needed; but Gonzales was removed by his government for harboring any but Spaniards in the South Sea. The same summer Martinez arrived in the corvette "Princessa"; he showed no ill-will to the Americans, but said that he would catch Douglas if he could find him.

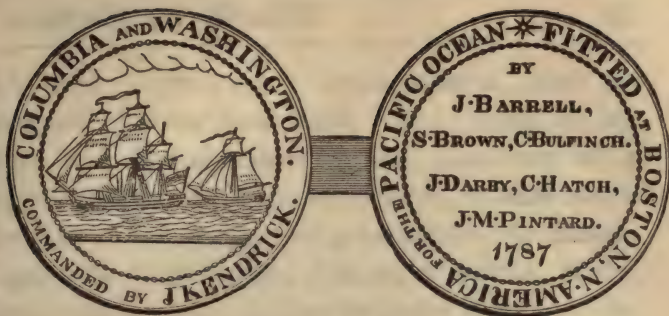
The many interesting events of this first voyage, or Kendrick's explorations to the north, and unhappy murder of his son; the settlement made and purchase of ground from Indians; and the return of the "Columbia," under Gray, to Boston, where she arrived in August, 1790, and was enthusiastically welcomed by the people, Governor Hancock himself coming to meet Gray, and the young Sandwich Island chief, Attoo, who was dressed in glittering feather cloth, and the first of his race ever seen in Boston—can be only alluded to here. Indeed the first voyage of the "Columbia" did not prove a financial success—the first great profits having been reaped by the Russians and English, and the Chinese market having become demoralized by the large offers made. But the people of Boston considered it a great event that the "Columbia" had sailed at all, and returned in safety, and that the American flag, which stood for a new idea, had been carried around the world. The voyage of Kendrick in the "Washington,"

while Gray was returning to Boston, is stated by Meares to have been through the Straits of Fuca, thence northward, through an extensive sea, for eight degrees, and proving that the territory embracing Nootka Sound was an island; which, if so, shows with how much energy the Americans were learning geographical secrets that Spaniards had blundered over for many years, fearing to approach the shore.

It can only be noticed, also most briefly, that other Americans were preparing to enter the Northwest Coast trade. An American captain named Metcalf, arriving at Canton in 1789 in the brig "Eleanora," purchased there a schooner which he styled the "Fair American," and placing her under the command of his son, sailed for Nootka; was arrested, however, on his arrival by Martinez; but was released and allowed to sail for the Hawaiian Islands—where he was attacked himself by natives, and his son, at another harbor, was overcome and the schooner seized. The accounts show rashness and harshness on the part of both the captains; but the natives acted with all the ferocity of savages, being incited both by revenge for injuries, and their thirst for the plunder—iron and brass being to them as valuable as so much silver and gold to whites.

Although not well satisfied with their venture the owners of the "Columbia" fitted her out for a second voyage; but before she sailed the brig "Hope," under Joseph Ingraham, former mate of the "Columbia," set sail; and was followed by the "Han-





THE COLUMBIA MEDAL



THE SHIP "COLUMBIA" AND THE SLOOP "WASHINGTON"

After an original drawing by Robert Haswell found among the private papers of Captain Robert Gray.



cock " and " Jefferson " from Boston, and the " Margaret " from New York. The voyage of Ingraham was distinguished by the discovery of a group of islands, in the South Pacific, a little north of the Marquesas group, which he named for American patriots, Washington, Adams, Franklin, Knox, Federal, and Lincoln. It may be hoped that in course of time it will come around so that these islands may come under the American flag with their old names. Touching at the Sandwich Islands, and sailing for the Northwest Coast, he arrived at Queen Charlotte's Island, called by the Americans Washington's Island, and speedily discovering a sound—it being no trick at all apparently for Americans to find inlets and harbors—which he called Magee's Sound in honor of one of the owners of his vessel, spent the summer trading and collecting information of the geography, resources, etc., of the country, which he inserted in his well kept journal. These names, too, should be remembered whenever this island comes—voluntarily—under the American flag. Indeed, as one takes note of these early discoveries of Americans, one can hardly resist the conclusion that priority of exploration should have given the entire coast up to 54 degrees, 40 minutes, to America. America's claim by discovery was as good there as southward; but was not followed by occupation and settlement. It should be noticed, too, that the same spirit was shown by all the Americans; they dashed ahead, running onto every shore, entering every suspicion



of an opening, and venturing into communication with every class and condition of human beings. This spirit has been well noticed by De Tocqueville, who describes the American traders and sailors as pursuing the business to the point of desperation, pressing both exploration and traffic to the last extremity.

Of the Americans that came to the Northwest Coast that season, however, the "Columbia," under Gray, carried off the prize. Sailing—on her second voyage—the 28th of September, 1790, she reached Clyoquot Sound the 5th of June the next year, and spent the rest of the season in exploring northward to the east side of Queen Charlotte's Island. In one of the inlets, which was explored over 100 miles, and thought by Gray to be the old river of the Kings of Fonte's narrative, he was attacked by natives and lost the mate and two sailors. He met Ingraham, and after comparing observations, the latter sailing for Canton, Gray returned to Clyoquot and spent the winter. He built a post which he named Fort Defiance, a strong revolutionary term. Much of the time was spent in building a schooner, the "Adventure," and in making chisels from their scrap iron for trade with the natives. Nevertheless, although thus separated from home by almost a year's time, these New Englanders did not forget their principles, and every Sunday work was laid off and Gray held religious services. He also took a great interest in the Indians who were camped in the neighborhood; and

as some of them were sick he was in the habit of visiting them, taking medicines, and such delicacies as boiled rice and bread and molasses to them with his own hands. Hoskins, clerk of the expedition, also tells of persuading a young Indian woman to wash her face—which was, according to Indian custom, stained with paint; and what a revelation of beauty was the result; she had “a fair complexion of red and white, and one of the most delightful countenances I ever beheld”—says the enthusiastic young man. But the white men’s admiration proved less controlling over the Indian belle than the sneers of her own people who speedily induced her to paint up again.

But these people were of the tribe which afterwards wrought the destruction of the “Tonquin,” and notwithstanding the kindness of Gray formed a conspiracy to capture his fort. They believed that they could persuade Attoo, the Hawaiian youth, to assist them, on promise of making him chief; and his part was to wet the powder of the Americans. But though for a time inclined to favor the plan, he at length confessed all to Gray, who was ready to meet the Indians, and they finding this out suddenly retired from the attack they had planned.

On the arrival of spring, of 1792, Gray took the “Columbia” and explored southward. As related by Vancouver, Gray had been off the mouth of a river in latitude 46 degrees, 10 minutes—that of the Columbia—trying for nine days to get in; and this

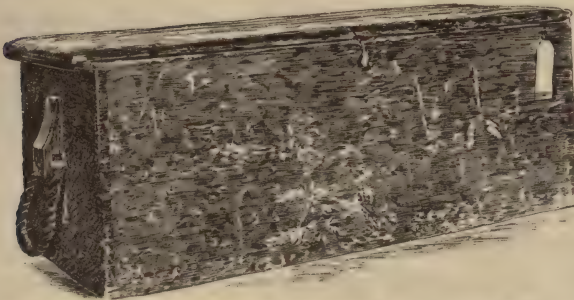
port he wished now to see once more. Precisely when he was off the Columbia the nine days' time does not appear, but most probably when he came upon the coast the previous year. It was at six o'clock, on Sunday morning, the 29th of April, near the Straits of Fuca, that he met Vancouver, and was told by the British officers that there was no entrance at Cape Disappointment; but he does not seem to have been deterred by this from making his own observations. On the seventh of May we find him proceeding down the coast and sighting an opening which he decided to try. This was in latitude 46 degrees, 58 minutes; about forty miles north of the Columbia. His temper and manner of procedure are shown here. At six miles from shore he saw an entrance which had the appearance of a good harbor. The jolly boat was sent ahead to sound and find anchorage, while the vessel stood back and forth, against a strong weather current. The boat returned at one, reporting no anchorage. Then, as Gray says laconically, "made sail on the ship and stood in shore. We soon saw from the masthead a passage between the sand bars. At half-past three bore in away, and ran in northeast by east, having four to eight fathoms, having a strong ebb tide to stem." One can easily imagine how the sand bars opened out, the entrance swung open like a gate, leaving abundant room between the breakers, as the man who dared venture approached. This has very properly been called Gray's Harbor, though it was named by





THE SHIP "COLUMBIA" AND THE BRIG "HANCOCK" IN  
HANCOCK RIVER, QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S ISLAND

From an original drawing by Robert Haswell found among the private papers of  
Captain Robert Gray.



CAPTAIN ROBERT GRAY'S SEA CHEST,

which was carried on the "Columbia" during her memorable voyage to the North Pacific coast. This valued relic is now in possession of the Oregon Historical Society.



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its discoverer Bullfinch's Harbor, in honor of the Harvard graduate and part owner of the vessel.

Here he remained until the tenth, many canoes coming alongside the ship, but no hostile disposition being reported. On the afternoon of that day, which was pleasant with a wind from the sea, the ship was unmoored, beat down the bay, and passed out, getting clear at seven. The object now was to enter the river below Cape Disappointment. No mention is made that the night was otherwise than calm; and "at the first light" all sails were set, and the course laid towards the desired port. At four o'clock in the morning this was seen east-south-east, six leagues off. Sail was brought to steering order, and the wind hauled inshore. The morning was undoubtedly fair, as the shore was easily seen nearly twenty miles away, and the air light; as it was not until eight, or four hours' sail, before the harbor was reached. The intention was to run in, and there seems to have been no faltering. The breakers, which had seemed to Vancouver, Meares, Heceta, and later to the Russians, to close the entrance, were correctly seen by Gray to offer a wide channel between the two spits, and they guided his course so that he followed a channel with five to seven fathoms of water—thirty feet or over. The conditions were undoubtedly favorable, the morning clear, the wind light, the sea not high, and the channel as clearly indicated by its broad blue course between the tumbling breakers on the southeast, and those on the northwest, as if indicated



by buoys. Yet the confidence with which Gray approached, and his quick perception of all these points, showed him to have had a full mastery of the situation, such as no other navigator had shown. Dr. Fiske does not think the entrance made by Gray in itself particularly remarkable. It was not, except comparatively; but considering that no other navigator had ever succeeded in crossing, and that he had himself been baffled nine days on his former attempt, and that he must feel his way as he advanced, it showed a plucky and resolute spirit, and seaman-like handling of his vessel. All this showed a New World man, strongly contrasting with the Old World man, who approached the river and went away with only good excuses for not entering. The river itself seems to have owned the supremacy of the master captain, and the name bestowed by him, Columbia River, has been accepted and borne ever since. As pointed out by Dr. Fiske, three centuries after his own discovery of America, Columbus received the added honor of a name thus indirectly for him given to the greatest river of the Pacific Coast falling into the ocean.

After crossing the bar it was at once apparent that here was a large river of fresh water—completely disposing of the representation of Vancouver, that this was not the river, but simply an ocean bay, into which the river discharged more than twenty-five miles above. Dr. Fiske says, very justly as well as humorously, in his Centennial address: “ Consid-



### THE "COLUMBIA" AT THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

Captain Gray, with chart in hand, conversing with one of his officers.



### THE "COLUMBIA" IN JUAN DE FUCA STRAITS

Captain Gray firing upon the natives who disregarded his orders to keep off.

Both of the above engravings are from original drawings by Davidson found among Captain Gray's private papers.





ering the dogmatic assurance with which the British officers had maintained that there was no river there, until Gray furnished them with positive information, but for which Broughton would, in all probability, never have made his reconnoissance, there is a coolness about this argument that on a sultry day would be quite refreshing." Indeed, even at this late date, when the honor of discovery is acknowledged by all as belonging to the American, the claim of the British that they were the true discoverers of the river cannot but be resented as both untruthful and ungenerous. That Gray understood that the river carried its waters to the ocean is shown not only by his denominating it "a large river of fresh water," but by his immediately pumping out the salt water from his casks, and the next day filling "up all the water-casks in the hold"—which could not be done except by pumping in from the river.

The ship was at once greeted by natives in canoes, and when she came to anchor a little above the Chinook village "vast numbers came alongside." There is no indication that they were otherwise than friendly and courteous. The next day the ship set sail and moved up stream a little, but a southeast wind coming on with rain and "dirty weather" she soon came to anchor. The rain with fresh gales continued the next day, but on the 14th, the sea breeze rising aft, the ship was unmoored and stood up the north channel about fifteen miles—probably not so far in a direct course—finally coming aground near what is

now undoubtedly known as Gray's Bay. As Gray surmised, he had taken the wrong channel—the true course from Chinook being southeast to Tongue Point. After making observations on the shore, trading—no doubt—with the natives that still swarmed alongside, and giving the name Columbia to the river, and Hancock to the cape on the north side, and Adams to that on the south, Gray stood down toward the bar, attempting a crossing on the 19th, but wind failing delayed until the next day, when he beat out against the tide—altogether the most seamanlike course—on the 20th.

Thus was discovered the Columbia River at last, the navigator finally appearing who at once perceived its true character and to whom its complex sands and currents were plain from the moment he looked at the surface. Between the long Clatsop spit on the south, and Peacock spit on the north, which stood farther out and seemed to overlap, he readily saw a broad passageway between the breakers, and followed it to his “desired port.”

In the season of 1791-2 there were many vessels on the Northwest Coast, Fiske stating the number as high as thirty. To these, through Gray's information of his discovery to both Ingraham and Vancouver, whom he again saw at Nootka, the existence of the Columbia became known, and the river was then frequented by fur traders. In the autumn, as stated in volume one, Broughton found an American vessel, the “Jenny,” of Bristol, anchored within

Cape Disappointment, and the name of the captain, Baker, was bestowed upon the bay. The claim of the Americans was fully made known, and was finally recognized in right as well as in history, to give title to Oregon on the part of the United States—supplemented by subsequent use and occupation.

From this time, 1792, for about twenty years the Americans held the trade in furs from the Northwest Coast to China. As Greenhow summarizes the condition: “On the North Pacific Coast the direct trade between the American coasts and China remained from 1796 to 1814 almost entirely, as MacKenzie said, in the hands of citizens of the United States; the British merchants were restrained from engaging in it from the opposition of the East India Company; the Russians were not admitted into the Chinese ports; and few ships of any other nation were seen in that part of the ocean.” MacKenzie stated the routes and methods of the Americans, and summed them up rather unfavorably as follows: that these American “adventurers acted without regularity or capital, or the desire of conciliating future confidence, and looking only to the interest of the moment.”

Much more hostile was the report of Archibald Campbell, in his voyage around the world, 1806 to 1812. He thus describes the course of American traffic:—“These adventurers set out on the voyage with a few trinkets of very little value. In the southern Pacific they pick up some seal skins, and perhaps.



a few butts of oil; at the Gallipagos they lay in turtle, of which they preserve the shells; at Valparaiso they raise a few dollars in exchange for European articles; at Nootka and other ports of the northwest coasts they traffic with the natives for furs, which when the winter commences, they carry to the Sandwich Islands, to dry and preserve from vermin; here they leave their own people to take care of them, and embark, in lieu, the natives of the islands, to assist in navigating the northwest coasts, in search of more skins. The remainder of the cargo is then made up of sandal, which grows abundantly in the woods of Atooi and Owyhee; of tortoise shells, sharks' fins, and pearls of an inferior kind, all of which are acceptable in the China market; and with these and their dollars they purchase cargoes of tea, silks, and nankeens, and thus complete their voyage in the course of two or three years."

Though the tone of the above is not friendly, it is still an admirably succinct statement of the course of trade; and it is hardly to be supposed that the Americans would be more scrupulous or considerate than any other traders. Not until the American people sent missionaries to the islands of the Pacific were the really constructive elements of American society given an opportunity to act. The superiority of the Americans was chiefly at that time in greater boldness, energy, quickness of apprehension, and economy of management. It is not to be expected that men who have no permanent interests in a region



THE "COLUMBIA" IN A SQUALL



THE "COLUMBIA" ATTACKED BY SAVAGES AT NIGHT  
NEAR CHICKLESET

The above engravings are from original drawings by Davidson found among the private papers of Captain Robert Gray.





will act in its interest. Consequently we find that although for twenty years being almost sole masters of the North Pacific and greatly enriching their own States on the Atlantic, and building up an American merchant marine, that easily, in the war of 1812 furnished their country a navy that well nigh swept British commerce from the seas, the operations of the American traders on this coast disappeared like a dream, leaving no lasting sign except the first and most momentous act of all—that of the discovery of the Columbia. Around this point is focalized all the subsequent American history in the Pacific for half a century.

That the American seamen had their share of sufferings is well known in the little book of John R. Jewett, the armorer of the ship “Boston,” of Boston, which was captured by Maquinna, at Nootka, and all on board were put to death, except Jewett and one other. Jewett remained in captivity from 1803 to 1807, and gives a minute and rather favorable account of the Nootkan chief.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE UNIVERSAL AMERICAN





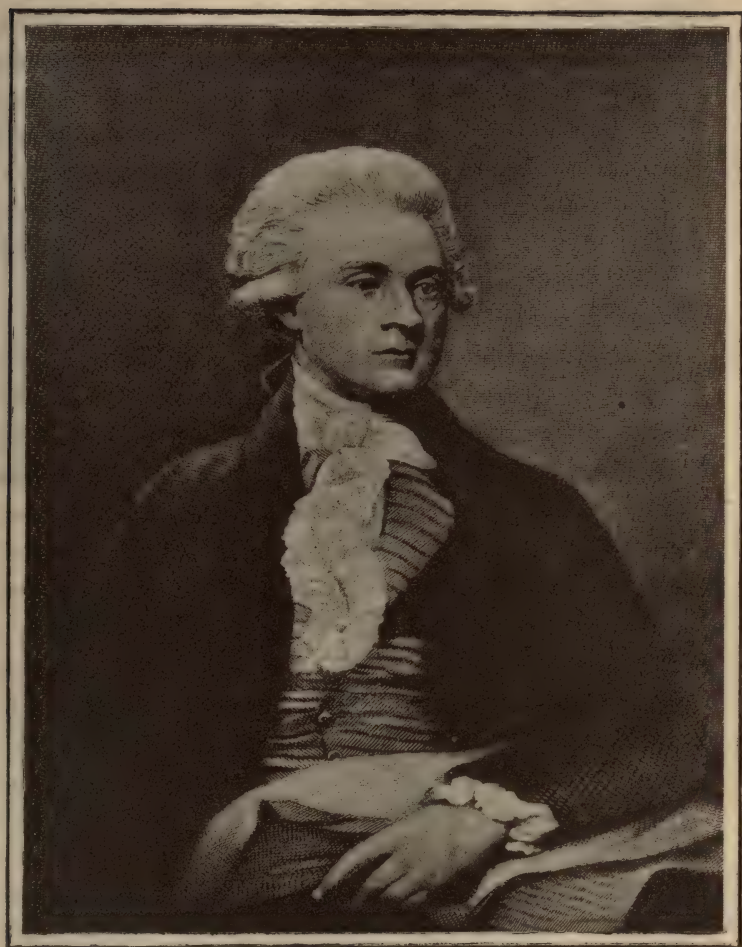
**T**HE story of Oregon is of many complex influences. There were from the first two almost independent trains of action and interest having for their object the same point—the mouth of the Columbia River. One was the commercial interest seeking trade by sea; and the other the popular interest, seeking connection by land. While thus broadly distinguished, we must still allow to each a distinctly patriotic, or American, interest; the expeditions by sea, prosecuting the fur trade, as we have seen in the names given by Gray and Ingraham, and the enthusiasm of Boston that the American flag had gone around the world, showing a people's spirit; and the expeditions by land, as we shall now see, although being in their main intent the embodiment of a rising national spirit, depending for their practical success upon enlisting commercial interest.

To one man alone, as the history seems to prove, must be referred the effective concentration of popular concern for knowing more of the great West, and opening the path by which American sovereignty was to reach the Pacific Ocean. This was Thomas Jefferson, the great apostle of Democracy. It is not to be considered an inconsistency in him that favoring popular sovereignty as he did, and believing in the wisdom of the masses, and that in the decision of all the units of organized society lay greater safety than in that of any part of it, he still led the way to the greatest territorial expansion that the Republic

has yet taken. In this policy he but crystallized and placed in concrete act precisely what all the American people were desiring, and what he perceived they would sustain. It was his entire belief that the Government, and its officers, were for the purpose of giving effect to the wishes and objects of the people whom they represented, and that any policy, or purpose ardently desired by the whole body of the people was more likely to be wise than otherwise in the circumstances. As the son of a pioneer who made a home as second or third settler on land that could be bought for a mug of liquor, and himself an ardent agriculturist, he felt and knew the passion of the Virginians for life still westward, and saw in the primitive wilderness the opportunity of new States arising not only free from the tyrannies of Europe, but free also from some of the blighting influences that had followed the American colonists from Europe to America—especially that of slavery.

For the problem of extirpating slavery was ever in his mind, and whenever he had the opportunity he sought to limit its spread, or to restrict its influence; he succeeded in inserting the clause that it should be prohibited in the Northwest Territory; he failed to retain in the Declaration of Independence a clause condemnatory of the system; and in the Virginia Legislature failed to carry a bill making manumission of slaves by their masters legal. Perhaps he had a prescience that the movement of Americans westward, and the formation of new States, would result





THOMAS JEFFERSON



Portrait of a young woman, possibly a member of the family, seated and looking to the right. The image is a reproduction of a photograph from the collection of the [illegible] and is reproduced here with the permission of the [illegible].

in growth of the idea of freedom to all. What he did not foresee, or if he had foreseen he would have hesitated to bring about, in the movement of Americans westward, was the prodigious growth of the National Idea, giving the nation overwhelming importance in comparison with the States. In such preponderance he feared that State rights and individual rights would be neglected, or overborne. Yet with territorial expansion, which could be accomplished only under the patronage and action of the general government, the central authority must become paramount. Jefferson did more than anyone to bring about this growth; acting constantly under the pressure of a spirit and a necessity that no one could resist, and which could only be guided into lines of justice and general good will. Every step he took was proximate, the ultimate object being hidden to him, as well as to others. He acted, however, consciously as interpreter of the will of the masses of the people, and in his promotion of the growth of the national territory met the least resistance encountered in all his policies or administration. He acted also, in these measures, when to have acted otherwise, or to have not acted at all, would have involved not only public censure, and probably the overthrow of his party, and reversal of his theory of government, but also would have invited the resumption of European control again in North America. Each step in territorial growth was just as plainly indicated in necessity as the first—that of George Rogers Clark when



he occupied the western territory during the Revolutionary War to the Mississippi; or as when John Jay by a coup d'état agreed with England and against France to hold that territory.

Jefferson has been complained of as a man of very broad and indefinite generalizations, bordering on imagination. A biographer, who is not very favorable, nor very appreciative, speaks of his detestation of story books and novels; and adds:—" Though strangely devoid of any appreciation of fiction in literature, yet he had a powerful imagination, which ranged wholly in the unromantic domain of the useful, and ran into conferring practical benefits on mankind." Without doubt he had a romantic fancy teeming with projects of universal benevolence, and his thoughts and style of writing were strongly tinged by the language of the times—which had to do with discussion of fundamental principles, and broke away from forms and precedents. But that united with this love of creation *de novo*, and proclamation of general truths, he was able also to deal with concrete facts, and definite actions, is well shown in the analysis of the Declaration of Independence, as made by Dr. Fiske; beginning with enunciation of human rights in the style of the French Academy he speedily falls into the thought and manner of the English squire, making a simple statement of grievances, which, rather than the generalizations with which he began, justify the revolution and compel separation. So in his interest in the Northwest Coast we find

both the romantic ideation of the country, and sympathetic interest in the Indians, and the love of adventure, such as might be seen in Swift or Defoe, but ended with them in merely a great story; and the temperament for seeing as well as imagining the scenes spread out in the unknown wilderness, such as was found in Ledyard, and made him an adventurer of every continent of the world; but the still further capacity to compact and nurture these imaginative influences, and form a body capable of executing them, not in his own person, but in the person of an entire nation—showing him the statesman. No one more than Jefferson merits the designation, both humorously and geographically exact, of “the universal American.” So great was the universality of his genius that not only could he make his bodily presence everywhere felt in the most critical points during his age—witnessing two great revolutions—but he was able also to extend his mental grasp far beyond old boundaries, and bring to light and to concrete act on the part of millions his own conceptions. In fact, like men of great mentality, his mental or spiritual presence was much more commanding than his bodily presence; as in person, though lacking little of the stature of Washington, he shrank from conflict, and with a husky voice, never attempted a public speech.

Precisely when Jefferson’s interest in an exploring expedition across the continent to the Pacific Ocean began is not certainly known. It is usually

dated to his meeting with Ledyard in Paris. Jefferson himself thus describes meeting Ledyard there: " When I was in Paris (1786) John Ledyard of Connecticut arrived there, well known in America for energy of body and mind. He had accompanied Captain Cook on his voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and distinguished himself on that voyage for intrepidity. Being of a roaming disposition, he was now panting for some new enterprise. His immediate object at Paris was to engage some mercantile company in the trade of the Western Coast of America, in which, however, he failed. I then proposed to him to go by land to Kamchatka, cross in some of the Russian vessels to Nootka Sound, fall down into the latitude of the Missouri, and penetrate to and through that to the United States. He eagerly seized the idea, and only asked to be assured of the permission of the Russian Government." The plan, unless Ledyard had shown far more address than any other lone man on the North Pacific Coast in passing through the Indian country, was, as well said by Bancroft, wholly impracticable; and it was perhaps fortunate for Ledyard that he was brought back from Siberia by the Russians, by whom no permission to explore was granted.

It is not certain that this meeting at Paris was the first of Jefferson's with Ledyard, and the remark inserted of the traveler as " well known in the United States " implies that if Jefferson had not seen him personally, he was well known to him before. Speak-



ing again of Ledyard in a letter to Madison, of July 19, 1788, Jefferson says that Ledyard had just left on his African exploration, and added, "He promises me, if he escapes through his journey, he will go to Kentucky and endeavor to penetrate westwardly to the South Sea."

But that the future president was thinking of an exploration by Americans to the Pacific across the continent, is shown by a letter to George Rogers Clark, as early as December 4, 1783. This is as follows:—"I find they have subscribed a very large sum of money in England for exploring the country from the Mississippi to California. They pretend that it is only to promote knowledge. I am afraid they have thoughts of colonizing into that quarter. Some of us have been talking here in a feeble way of making an attempt to search that country; but I doubt whether we have enough of that kind of spirit to raise the money. How would you like to lead such a party? Though I am afraid our prospect is not worth asking the question." Precisely what occurrence it was which led to his writing this letter is not now known; or whether he was incited to it by perusal of the short account given in England, or by the narrative of John Ledyard, is not known. It will be remembered that Ledyard wrote his account from January to May of the same year, and it was published during the summer. It hardly seems that this would have escaped so universal a reader as Jefferson; nor on the other hand would it seem likely that

if he had read the book at that time and had been incited to act on it, he would have omitted mentioning this. It seems more probable therefore that his first interest in extending exploration to the Pacific came only indirectly from Ledyard; but as he was a thorough hater of the English, and could not bear the thought of their government, which was founded upon gradations of society, and the whole subject to a king, some move of that distrusted people caught his eye, and he laid about in a private way to head it off. This indirectly, no doubt, came from Cook's voyage, and possibly from Ledyard's book, as publication of this may have prompted the English to talk of explorations across America.

But whatever his source of interest, it was ten years from their first conception before he was able to make any move. This was in 1792. He proposed that the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia undertake the task, and that it be carried forward by private subscriptions. Enough funds were raised to warrant the enterprise, and it was decided to send but two men; Meriwether Lewis, of Virginia, for one, eagerly volunteered to go. It was thought best to associate with him some foreigner, and for the purpose Andre Michaux was chosen, a noted French botanist. The improbability of two men making their way alone is not so great as Bancroft seems to think, as it was thus the Spanish friars traversed the savage country of the Arizona Indians; and MacKenzie had little better escort. But it soon

developed that such a design was not safe politically. Michaux sought to aid the scheme of Genet, minister from the French Republic then at war with England, to induce the American settlers to advance upon Louisiana, then Spanish territory. The French, also, probably looked with little favor upon American explorations in North America, where they still had dreams of reoccupation. Michaux was consequently recalled. Thus ended in practical failure two efforts of Jefferson's to promote exploration of the country across from the Missouri to the Pacific. It seemed to him almost intolerable, as it had to Ledyard, that this, the most interesting undiscovered part of the world, and in imminent danger of being occupied by a European power that might embroil America in endless wars, should be neglected.

Upon becoming President in 1800 the wheel of fortune now turned in his favor. It is fortunate for America, and fortunate for Oregon, that Jefferson was elected. The Federalists were avowedly friendly with the British, and it is hardly probable that any effort to follow up Gray's discoveries, or of supporting the Americans on the Northwest Pacific, would have been favorably considered; certainly not if coming from Jefferson, and that under the cloud of defeat. He did not long rest after his assumption of authority about advancing his most favored scheme. It was not wholly certain just how to bring the matter before Congress, especially upon his particular theory of government, and the slender power of Con-



gress to undertake special enterprises. But Jefferson seems to have considered this wholly within the province of the general government, if susceptible of government aid at all; and selected the most natural way to bring it up.

This came from the Government agencies, or trading houses, of the Northwestern Indians. These trading houses were establishments of the Government, and were the pattern upon which the Indian agent stores and supply depots of a later day were modeled. Goods were sold from these houses at reasonable terms, and the advantages to the Indians of being thus supplied with articles that would induce them to adopt civilized customs and industries, and without exactions and extortions of unprincipled men, was very apparent. Jefferson was ever an admirer of the Indians, and desired sincerely to promote their welfare. But these trading houses were now about to meet the exigency of expiring contracts, and some sort of relief, or further legislation, was required. With this could be coupled the proposition of an exploring expedition up the Missouri, then in territory supposed to belong to Spain, but really to France; and secure a report upon the state of trade to the Rocky Mountains, with measures to promote this; and then could come the added proposition to continue the exploration from the Missouri to the Pacific.

While the trading house contracts and the idea of promoting trade on the Missouri were convenient

steps toward what proved to be the more important proposition, it need not be supposed that in the mind of Jefferson they were mere handles. They were in themselves important and necessary for legislative consideration, and great results almost immediately arose from the fur trade of Americans on the Missouri. After stating these objects he concludes with proposing that the expedition be authorized to explore to the Pacific, saying:—"While other nations have encountered great expense to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge, by undertaking voyages of discovery, and for other literary purposes, in various parts and directions, our nation seems to owe to its own interests to explore this the only line of easy communication across the continent, and so directly traversing our own part of it. The interests of commerce place the principal object within the constitutional power of Congress, and that it should incidentally advance geographical knowledge of our continent cannot but be an additional gratification."

Congress promptly passed an appropriation of \$2,500 to defray the expenses "For the purpose of extending the external commerce of the United States."

It is well to note that all this was done before the purchase of Louisiana; thus Oregon did not come swept in by the force of that important event, which was not American in its inception, but perhaps rather led the way for that acquisition. "The aims of the Lewis and Clark expedition were scientific and com-

mercial rather than political and imperial." The real object, apart from the profound interest felt by Americans in exploration of a region at their very doors in which all the world felt a keen curiosity, was to promote the fur trade in the Rocky Mountains, and, if practicable, to bring the furs even from the Columbia down the Missouri, to build up the western trading posts. Politically, no doubt, Jefferson was coming to the point that no other country should occupy that quarter of North America, but his idea never, as appears from his correspondence with Astor near the close of his administration, went to the point that this should be annexed to the United States. The results of his promotion of the exploration went in the end beyond his expectation—which was—so far as expressed—simply the hope that on the Pacific Ocean a people of like character, faith, and political institutions might be established who, in company with the United States, should advance the cause of free government throughout the world. He looked to the popularization of government under republican forms, among all the nations of the world, as has since his day been accomplished in Central and South America, and in other regions.



## CHAPTER V

### SHADOW OF CÆSAR .



**W**HILE the United States occupied the territory only as far west as the Mississippi, and European States owned, or might set up a claim to, the other portions, our nation could not be free from the chances of European politics. This complication had been for a century the bane of America. Every time a war in Europe broke out, whatever the cause, it was speedily transferred to their colonies in America. Thus followed in slow and ruthless procession King William's, Queen Anne's, and the French and Indian War. With the success of England in the last of these bloody and dispiriting struggles, and the transfer of all the northern part of North America to one power, it seemed that the peril might end. But scarcely had England taken possession before a party in that expanding empire set up a theory for government of the colonies that brought on eight years of still more bloody and destructive conflict. The final success of the Americans, and the erection of the Government of the United States which was recognized by all the world, gave new hope that America would be left to its own free and peaceful development, and apply its energies to the prosecution of its own problems without being made the playground of European tyrants.

With the situation as left at the close of the Revolution the prospect of this seemed good. The only power left in America besides Great Britain was Spain; which, although holding an immense terri-



tory, embracing all South America and part of North America, was even then waning in strength. Moreover the very fact that her territory was so great in America led to the probability that she would not desire to acquire more, and indeed that she would not unwillingly yield to the needs of the expanding Americans. The first indication that there might be a disturbance of this security came in connection with the war that broke out in 1795 between Spain and England. It was at once anticipated that the latter would seize the North American possessions of the former. This would be but to reopen the long European struggles on American ground, out of which it would be impossible to keep the United States. Moreover it was seen at once that the United States could never allow England, or any one European power, to hold the mouth of both the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi. Jefferson, the Secretary of State, wrote at once to the American minister at London, after referring to the rumors as above:—"We wish you therefore to intimate to them (the British ministry) that we cannot be indifferent to enterprises of this kind; that we should contemplate an exchange of neighbors with extreme uneasiness; that a due balance on our borders is not less desirable to us than a balance of power in Europe has always appeared to them." This, as has been well said, is the first form of the celebrated Monroe doctrine.

But in the meantime he had also been endeavoring, for five years before this, to get a settlement of the

question of the navigation of the Mississippi. This was becoming daily a more and more vital matter to the growing West. The products of the new territories, fast becoming States, had their natural market at the mouth of the great river. Flatboats were already descending laden with the products of the farms, and must meet there the ocean traffic. But this was left in the entire possession of Spain; the French plenipotentiary astutely arranging that she should own both sides. In 1790 Jefferson, as Secretary of State, wrote to the American minister at Madrid desiring an "early settlement of the matter" of navigating the mouth of the Mississippi River; stating that it was "a port where the sea and river vessels may meet and exchange loads, and where those employed about them must be safe and unmolested." He declared that the matter was urgent, and that this view must be pressed almost as an ultimatum, since it was "impossible to answer for the forbearance of our Western citizens"; adding, "We endeavor to quiet them by the expectation of a settlement by peaceable means. But should they in a moment of impatience hazard others, there is no saying how far we may be led; for neither themselves or their rights will ever be abandoned by us." Although thus urgent, it was not until 1795 that the treaty was finally negotiated giving the United States right of navigation and use of the mouth of the Mississippi.

Great uneasiness was felt, however, all this time

as to the intentions of France. Jefferson had not lived among the French in vain, and had learned perfectly their not yet abandoned hopes in the New World. He was a perfect statesman, although an idealist in the field of government, and understood as well as any the motives by which men were ordinarily actuated. He therefore watched closely for indications of revival of French aspirations in America. In 1790 he thought that he detected these in the actions of the French minister to the United States, and wrote the minister at Paris:—"It is believed here that the Count De Moutier during his residence with us conceived the project of again engaging France in a colony on this continent; and that he directed his views to some of the country on the Mississippi; and attained and communicated a good deal of matter to his court." He then desired our minister to suggest to the king of France that such plans on American soil must end the friendship between the two nations.

On October 1, 1800, the much feared event took place. France by a secret treaty regained from Spain all the immense Louisiana territory ceded secretly to that power in 1762 to put it out of the hand of England. This was sufficient notice that America was again to be the colonizing ground of European States, and that the conditions prior to the French and Indian War were to be resumed. This was not fully known until 1802. Jefferson then saw, most reluctantly, but most distinctly, that France was no



more our natural friend, but our natural enemy. Being now president, he wrote the American minister at Paris:—"The cession of Louisiana and the Floridas by Spain to France works sorely on the United States. . . . It completely reverses all political relations. There is on the globe one single spot the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans. It is impossible that France and the United States can long continue friends when they meet in so irritable a position. . . . The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to restrain her power within her low water mark." The conclusion of this, he did not hesitate to say, was to compel an alliance of the United States with England; France could not be defied unless we had the assistance of the great sea power. This was surely gloomy enough to a man whose great support had been in France, and whose most deadly fear was in the anglicization of American institutions. But he was not stating so much what he wished as what he foresaw must follow if France resumed an imperial policy in the New World.

That she did so was certain enough. She had only by the hardest struggle been cooped up in Europe, and had been dispossessed of her colonies in both Asia and America. Under Napoleon Bonaparte, as first consul, but virtual emperor, she was ready to regain all that she had lost at Quebec. Napoleon, as is well known, contemplated for a time the subjugation of all North America, including the United States; and

establishing a power that would dominate all the world. In this situation Jefferson sought for some way of still retaining the good will of France, and avoiding the necessity of defying her, and thus driving his country to a British alliance. He had already been attempting to purchase the island of New Orleans from Spain. He concluded to try the same plan with France; intimating that if peaceable negotiation and purchase did not succeed the people of the West might be irritated to the point of hostilities. At a secret session of Congress, which was now overwhelmingly Republican—that is anti-Federalist—he obtained an appropriation of two million dollars for the purchase. Livingston was minister at Paris, but seemed to be making little progress toward securing an open river.

The clamor in the West could be stilled only by despatching another representative as special envoy and Monroe was detailed, for political effect, at home. On arriving in Paris he found a most extraordinary situation. Napoleon, who understood only imperial ideas of government, but understood them to a dot, saw the rising storm in Europe, and that it would be impossible to increase, and doubtful to defend, his American possessions. He saw that in the general war about to rise against him France had resumed her American occupancy merely to add it to the British Empire. He saw that with this went the empire of the world; Pitt must still triumph. But there was now another fac-

tor; this was the United States. Give Louisiana to the United States and put it, and the empire of the world, forever out of the reach of England, was his conclusion; then let him be free himself to crush his enemies in detail in Europe. Then America, if not France, even if France failed, would be the world power.

This was no sooner concluded than done. Details of the negotiation are well known. All Louisiana, from the gulf to the 49th parallel, and west to the Rocky Mountains, became the territory of the United States for the insignificant purchase price of \$15,000,000. Monroe and Livingston accepted Napoleon's terms; Jefferson agreed and formulated a treaty, and Congress all but unanimously ratified it.

Napoleon appreciated fully what he was doing, and felt satisfaction in being the agency of destiny in America as well as in Europe. His words on the subject are of interest. He said:—"I know the full value of Louisiana, and I have been anxious to repair the fault of the French minister who abandoned it in 1762. A few lines of treaty have restored it to me, and I have scarcely recovered it before I must expect to lose it. But if it escapes from me it shall one day cost dearer to those who obliged me to strip myself of it than those to whom I wish to deliver it. The English have successively taken from France Canada, Cape Breton, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the richest portions of Asia. They shall not have the Mississippi, which they covet. . . . I



have not a moment to lose in putting it out of their reach. . . . I think of ceding it to the United States. . . . They only ask of me one town in Louisiana, but I already consider the entire colony as entirely lost; and it appears to me that in the hands of this growing power it will be more useful to the policy and even to the commerce of France than if I should attempt to keep it. . . . I renounce Louisiana. It is not only New Orleans that I will cede, it is the whole colony without any reservation. To attempt to retain it would be folly. I direct you to negotiate this offer with the envoys of the United States. I will be moderate, considering the necessity in which I am of making the sale. . . . Irresolution and deliberation are no longer in order. Do not even await the arrival of Mr. Monroe; have an interview with Mr. Livingston this very day."

After the treaty was negotiated he said:—"This accession of territory strengthens forever the power of the United States; and I have just given England a maritime rival that will sooner or later humble her pride."

Jefferson was as greatly pleased as Napoleon; a dispute as to use of a seaport, of ten years' standing, and rousing all the ungovernable passions of pride and self-interest, had been settled, and that without shedding a drop of blood; and a territory almost equal to the original area of the United States had been acquired by a stroke of the pen. But above all the fear of European intervention in American af-

fairs was at rest. The United States, for nearly fifty years, had no fear of rivalry in the New World. She soon became able to announce and defend the doctrine that American politics were to be disconnected from Old World affairs. It was at the very point of New Orleans that the United States put the final touch upon the proof that it was useless for any outside power to attempt control of this the western hemisphere.

This acquisition had a profound influence upon the growth of the national authority. It was freely admitted as unconstitutional, or extra constitutional, by Jefferson; but formed a precedent that has been even more binding than the written Constitution, since it recognized a necessity and a justification in the wisdom of the act which could not be foreseen or provided for in any written instrument. The President said:—"The Constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for incorporating foreign nations into our union. The Executive, in seizing the fugitive occurrence which so much advances the good of the country, has done an act beyond the Constitution. The Legislature in casting behind them metaphysical subtleties, and risking themselves like faithful servants, must ratify and pay for it, and throw themselves on the country for doing for them what they knew they would have done for themselves, had they been in a situation to do it." In order that this, and other acts of the same nature, might be under Constitutional warrant the

President proposed an amendment to cover the case, but it was not easy to write, and was allowed to lapse. But the principle was allowed to enter that necessity as it arises, and wisdom to meet it, may modify or carry out the intent of the Constitution, without specific warrant. This is an appeal to first principles, and can never be left out of consideration in applying any written instrument. Yet those who appeal to necessity, or to the "Wisdom of the Act," can expect no justification if the necessity does not exist, or if the act is proved unwise.

The effects of Napoleon's policy, and Jefferson's admission of a necessity that overruled the limits of the Constitution, had a large bearing upon the future of Oregon. Almost at once Americans began pouring into Missouri, Arkansas, and Iowa; the Mississippi was navigated; the fur trade of the Rocky Mountains was diverted down the Missouri and began to enrich the merchants of St. Louis, and to interest those of New York. On the Lewis and Clark expedition, already under way, as seen in the last chapter, the effects were important: The explorers were now to travel in their own territory as far west as the crests of the "Shining Mountains," or Rocky Mountains, as described by themselves.



## CHAPTER VI

### LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION



**I**T has been said of the Lewis and Clark expedition:—"The continental divide was surmounted in three different places, many miles apart. The actual travel by land and water, including various side trips, amounted to about one-third the circumference of the globe. This was done with the cost of one life, and without another serious casualty, though often with great hardship, sometimes much suffering, and occasional imminent peril. . . . The story of this adventure stands easily first and alone. This is our national epic of exploration."

Another specialist\* in Oregon history has said:—"While our title to the Oregon region was in question and our claim to the Pacific Northwest was disputed by England, it was customary to name the Lewis and Clark expedition as one of four or five links in the chain of our right. The list comprised generally the following: The discovery of the Columbia River by Robert Gray; the Lewis and Clark expedition; the founding of Astoria; the restitution of Astoria in 1818, involving an acknowledgment of our possession of the region; the transfer to us of the rights of Spain in the treaty of 1819. But were these events equally and independently decisive? The naval battle in Manila Bay is recognized by all as the decisive event leading to our possession of the Philippines. . . . Much the same relation did the Lewis and Clark expedition bear to the sub-

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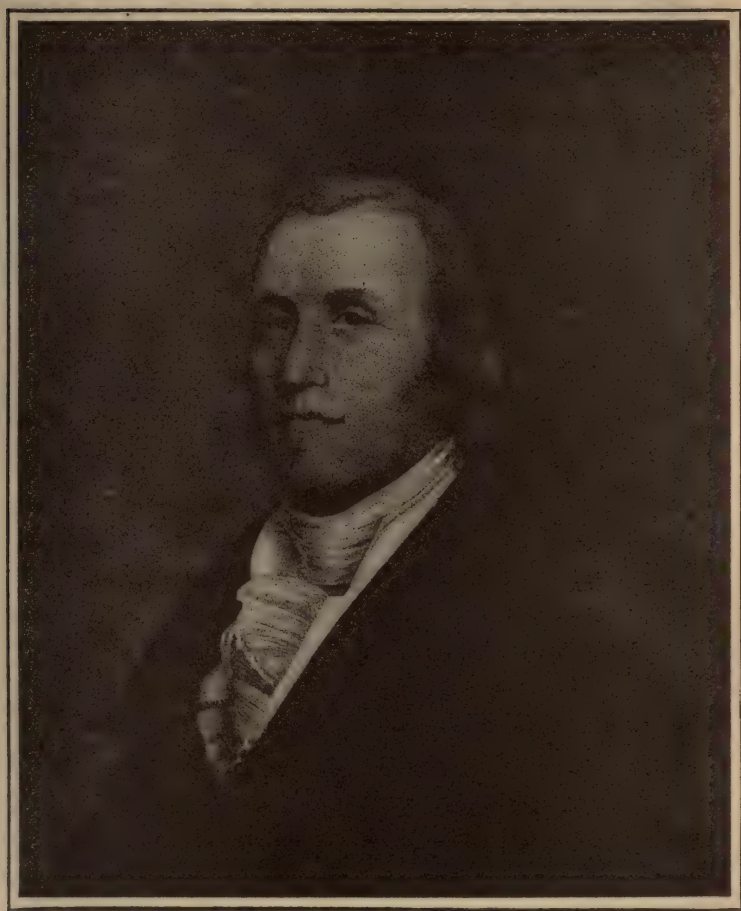
\*F. G. Young.



sequent events that furnished the basis of our claim to Oregon. . . . This can be claimed for the Lewis and Clark exploration rather than to Gray's discovery."

As a matter of fact, selection of the most decisive event, or the most influential character, in Oregon history is much like trying to determine which of the stones in an arch is most important, where each is necessary; or whether at the root, in the boll, or in the branch the flow of sap for the tree is pre-eminently important. The more one examines the history of Oregon in its entirety the more does he become impressed that all that happened was necessary to the outcome as we have it, and that all the events and characters were singularly dependent one upon another, making a beautiful organic growth. Upon whichever one the thought is concentrated, the relation to the whole is seen to extend both before and behind, and to include the most, if not all, that happened, and thus seems perhaps the first and chief; but observation of almost any other in the same light reveals the same connection and beauty of correspondence. However, if any one event can be singled out as the most important and distinctive, and embodying the most of hope and promise, it may be the expedition of Lewis and Clark.

This was Jefferson's personal conception, nourished for twenty years, and carried out to his intent, and in his spirit. Although when harassed Jefferson was capable of accepting conflict, strife was



WILLIAM CLARK





wholly against his grain. His nature was for gentleness and peace, and he determined from the first that the proposed journey should be one of amity, and that the Indian tribes should be treated in the most friendly manner by the explorers. He was very particular on this point, and was careful in his instructions to give no hint of a contemptuous or overbearing spirit. He does not refer to the native tribes that would be met as "savages," or as "barbarians," or even as Indians; but as "people," or "nations." After naming in detail some of the proposals useful to promotion of trade and commerce, he touches upon the higher humanitarian objects, concluding: "And considering the interest which every nation has in extending the authority of reason and justice among the people around them, it will be useful to acquire what knowledge you can of the state of morality, religion, and information among them; as it may better enable those who may endeavor to civilize and instruct them to adapt their measures to the existing notions and practices of those among whom they are to operate"—thus foreshadowing not only the many humanitarian efforts actually made since that day among the Indians by benevolent individuals, but a policy of civilization and education that our Government itself has, at rather a late day, adopted.

As to particular treatment of the Indians he says: "In all your intercourse with the natives treat them in the most friendly and conciliatory manner which

their own conduct will admit; allay all jealousies as to the object of your journey; satisfy them of its innocence; make them acquainted with the extent, character, peaceable, and commercial disposition of the United States; of our wish to be neighborly, friendly, and useful to them, and of our disposition to a commercial intercourse with them." He enlarges upon this to the extent of making personal friends of the chiefs, indicating the method that has in all the subsequent history with Indians been found very effective in making them peaceable, saying:—"If a few of the influential chiefs within practical distance wish to visit us, arrange such a visit"—that is, at Washington. He also suggests education of their young men: "If any of them should wish to have some of their people brought up with us, and taught such arts as may be useful to them, we will receive, instruct, and take care of them." While these directions and suggestions may be considered as largely in the interest of policy, as it would have been most idle to think of conducting an expedition across the continent in a manner hostile to the natives, forcing their way with fire and sword; it is also reasonably certain that Jefferson was indulging his feelings of good will, and was glad to think that these coincided with wise policy. It must also be noticed that only the benevolent ever regard benevolence, and regard for the rights and feelings of others, as either wise or politic; the harsh and cruel, of whom the world has had so many examples

that the Lewis and Clark expedition stands out as a grand exception, know of no procedure except according to their own nature. That Jefferson, however, felt keen interest in the welfare of the Indians themselves is indicated in his careful proposition that some of the "matter of the kine pox" be taken and the Indians be instructed in the advantages of vaccination—a startling antithesis to those who look upon the dark-skinned races as doomed, and that survival of the fittest requires their speedy extinction, either by war or disease.

The medallion medals that were struck as presents to the greater Indian chiefs bore the legend "Peace and Friendship," and hands clasped. This spirit is worthy of notice, as it was carried out to the letter, or rather in its full spirit, and to this was due the perfect success of the exploration. It was wisely seen by the President that the most effective way of gaining the co-operation of the natives was by mutual good will and respect; and he was correct in believing that these feelings were as controlling among the uncivilized tribes as among the whites.

He was very fortunate in the selection of his agents; both the captains at the head of the expedition carried out his intentions as carefully as had Monroe at Paris. Practically both Lewis and Clark were equal in rank, and acted as comrades; though technically the former outranked the latter. Lewis was a Virginian, "of distinguished Scotch ancestry," born in 1774. Although but thirty years old



when he assumed command of this exploring party, he had already attained eminence. As a boy he studied Latin and hunted 'possums after dark in the woods of the Old Dominion, and developed great strength, or endurance, of body, as well as courage, presence of mind, and capacity for roughing it in all sorts of conditions. When offering his services to conduct an exploration alone from Kentucky to "the South Sea," he declared that he could travel and live wherever an Indian could. The story is told that when but a boy of nine, at Charlottesville, Va., a camp of women and children were surprised at the evening fire by an arrow shot among them; Lewis at once, amid the fright and hubbub seized a bucket of water and put out the fire, to prevent the camp being seen; and fired off guns which scattered the enemy. Later he entered the army, and at length became private secretary of President Jefferson, who seems to have entertained the highest regard for him. Lewis was certainly not a learned man, though after his appointment to the position he spent some months in hard study to acquire knowledge of taking astronomical observations, and something of natural history. He was a man of considerable sentiment, and occasionally attempted fine description of remarkable scenery; though in this he was much inferior to Ledyard. The most of his writing is prosaic, but exact; he was careful to find and note the details as to the Indians, and these records are still of much value.

William Clark was also a native of Virginia, four years older than Lewis, whom he outranked in the army; and was commander over, but retired in 1796. They were already close friends, and though not technically equals on the expedition were practically so. There were four sergeants, Ordway, Prior, Floyd, and Gass. An interesting journal of the expedition was kept by Gass, among several others, it being the desire of the Government that as many as might be should keep a narrative of the exploration; resulting in seven. Colter, the two Field brothers, Shields, Drewyer, a half-breed, and York, Clark's colored servant, were among the useful members of the non-commissioned. York was of especial interest to the Indians both on account of his color and his enormous strength.

Another member of the party, though not acquired until some time after the expedition started, was an Indian woman, who is more likely to live in history, or romance, perhaps, than any of the others. This was Sacajawea, a Shoshone, who was a captive, and was bought as a wife for the Frenchman Chaboneau, and served as guide for the explorers to the borders of her own native land, and becoming known to her brother, when he was finally reached, gave such an account of the friendship of the whites that the Shoshones accorded them almost miraculously good treatment. Sacajawea, it may be mentioned here, accompanied the travelers to the Pacific, being allowed at her special request to go with the party on

their exploration to Tillamook Head, and to thus gaze upon the ocean, of which she had heard in the legends of her tribe.

The men selected were volunteers, and seem with but one or two exceptions to have been thoroughly reliable. Arms and ammunition for hunting, and a quantity of goods for distribution among the Indians, such as beads, looking-glasses, paints, flags, knives, and medals, were included among the supplies. The medals seem to have proved of greatest interest; several of the large ones having been found in the graves of Indians; one being from the Nez Percés; and the influence of that little piece of stamped metal can perhaps be traced in its effects upon this, as has been well styled, the royal tribe of American natives. This bore the likeness of the President—the rugged profile of Jefferson himself—while on the reverse were the clasped hands, the pipe and tomahawk crossed, and the legend “Peace and Friendship.”

The season of 1803 was occupied in arranging details, obtaining supplies, enlisting men, and proceeding as far as Missouri. Not until May 14th of the next year was the season sufficiently advanced to make the real start, that from the well-known Mississippi, up the then little known Missouri. This was to be a journey by water, in boats, as far as possible; though as later experience proved this led to neither the most easy crossing of the mountains, nor the shortest time; but was, on the whole, the best for the interests of the expedition and of America. By ex-



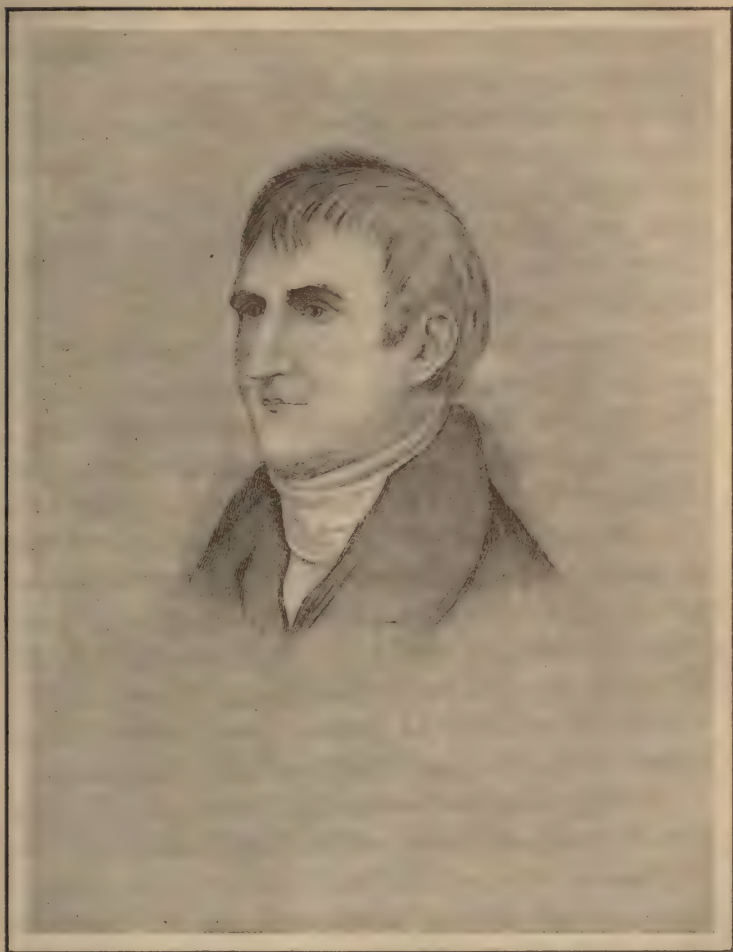
ploring the Missouri the fur routes were opened, and by descending upon the Columbia a better title to the upper waters was obtained than by the South Pass. The route was practically determined by the mission to the Indians of the upper Missouri in the interest of trade.

In the space allotted here we cannot dwell in full detail upon the great journey. On that day in May, as the big keel boat, with deck and lockers, and the two pirogues, swung out on the yellow waters of the swollen Missouri, and bent their slow course up stream, against swirls and around obstructive points, we can see once more the patient Anglo-Saxon, in his boat, intent on lifting the veil of mystery, and ready to encounter all that may await him in the unknown land beyond; and in this case these two brave American youths, and their party of woodsmen and hunters, were bound on a mission that had deterred already many Old World adventurers. There were the immense plains, with buffaloes and Indians; the ever-opposing river, obscure and yellow; the winter in the land of blizzards; then the rising swells of the Rocky Mountains, and finally their stupendous peaks, and cruel rock ridges, which cut moccasins and horses' hoofs alike as the lowering sun compelled forced marches before the winter snows began falling. Still more, there was the ever-present possibility of error in route, as they passed beyond the limits of the known, which would compel retracing of difficult paths, and perhaps so consume time as to

entangle them beyond their strength in ranges of mountains never before seen.

The mission proposed by the President was faithfully carried out. The Indian tribes were visited, their curiosities observed, and their disposition toward one another and the United States, and peaceful trade, were inquired into. The nearer to the limits of civilization the worse affected, and the worse off, the natives were found. The Missouri tribes were fast decaying and their deserted villages only were noticed, while the remnant of the people themselves had moved westward to join the Kansas or Osage Indians. With these people, numbering still some 1,200 warriors, friendly relations were established, and their stores of corn and pumpkins were liberally drawn upon. We notice with interest that the explorers spent time to learn the myth of the origin of the tribe, which was from a snail, that gradually on a sunny bank ripened into a man, and after receiving his bow and arrow married the daughter of the beaver—that industrious animal being sacred from harm among the tribe until the price of beaver skins at last overbore the scruples of consanguinity; at the entrance of little Manitou Creek also they note the figure of a man carved on the rock, “ which may represent some spirit, or deity.”

On the 26th of June the mouth of the Kansas, with its broad bottoms and not a little picturesque bluffs beyond, was passed, and on July 4th a small stream was named “ Independence Creek ”; while the party



MERIWETHER LEWIS





was obliged to work its way over bad sand bars, but were pleased to see upon the shore great masses of wild grapevines, giving promise of early fruit; and many wild berries and blooming roses on the shore. From a mound near the mouth of the Nemaha, which members of the party ascended, was seen a great prospect, embracing the lowlands of the Missouri, covered with undulating grasses, now five feet tall; and thence gradually rising into a second plain, where rich weeds and flowers, interspersed with copses of Osage plums, abounded; and grapes nearly ripe were gathered with the enjoyment of boys on a Saturday picnic. On the 21st, still forcing their way against the turbid Missouri in the boats, which allowed time for the captains to walk along the shore, and the hunters to ramble the hills, and the two horses to stray away at night and be caught up in the morning, the party reached the mouth of the Platte, a broad stream, "the bed of which it fills with moving sands"; and with much difficulty the boat and pirogues were worked around the sand bars formed in the Missouri near the mouth, "and came to above the point, having made fifteen miles." A week later they fell in with some of the scattered and broken bands of the Kite Indians—who seemed always on the wing, hence the name, and who had never given or received quarter, and as a result of too much strenuousness had been now all but annihilated; and also with remnants of the Pawnees and Ottoes. The extraordinarily beautiful contours of the Missouri

bottoms were frequently observed on excursions to the bluffs, or hills bordering, and are thus well described:—"At a distance varying from four to ten miles, and a height between 70 and 300 feet, two parallel ranges of highland afford a passage to the Missouri, which enriches the low grounds between them." The captains were thus looking over not only what has since become one of the richest and most populous parts of the United States, but the region from which many of the Oregon settlers took their start across the continent. At one of these picturesque highlands a meeting with the Missouris and Ottoes was arranged, and after many speeches, medals were placed upon the chiefs, and the desire for peace and trade, and general satisfaction with the transfer from France to the United States, was expressed. The place was called Council Bluffs—though not the exact spot now so named.

Much interest was taken as they passed the mound on the river where the great chief, The Black Bird, was buried; and his fate, with that of 400 of his warriors, from smallpox, was noticed in sympathetic manner. By the pestilence the tribe was driven to a sort of frenzy; many of the stricken braves, before dying, killed their wives and children also that they might all go together to the future hunting grounds. These tales were given by Dorion, the interpreter. Here the Americans were able to make peace between warring tribes, and interest them in trade with the whites. On the 20th of August the site of Sioux



City was reached, and a melancholy interest attaches from the death here of Charles Floyd—a valuable and highly esteemed man. An excursion was taken also, on a day so hot that the dog that accompanied Lewis gave out from heat and had to be sent back, to a singular mound seen at a distance, of such regular formation as to suggest artificial construction; but being found of the same geological formation as the shore bluffs was concluded to be the carving of nature. This mound, like the most of places having some singularity, was invested by the Indians with superstitious terrors—being inhabited by the little people, about 18 inches tall, with disproportionately large heads, and of an evil disposition, who shot all who approached, having for the purpose murderous little arrows—evidently the same superstition as that of the Klamaths, of the Little Dwarf, or the pygmies who left tiny tracks in the snow. None of these mischievous beings were seen, but the coolness with which the whites entered haunted places proved to the Indians, not that the superstition was untrue, but that the whites were of a superior order.

As September came the country of the Sioux was reached, the timber now having all but disappeared, and what was left being of a stunted form. The numerous tribes of the Sioux were found to be friendly at first, but of a treacherous and unreliable disposition. They were a conquering people, having come originally from the country of Winnipeg, and had forced their way west, and had both the greater en-

ergy and the greater corruption of a people that had mingled with the border whites. They had been in contact with the Canadian fur traders, and had learned white men's vices; begging constantly for some "of the Great Father's milk"—or whisky. They also had ideas of trade, and were finally not well pleased when it was understood that the expedition was to proceed westward; twice they attempted to stop the boat, on the second occasion a number of Indians sitting on the hawser, and refusing to move until the chief was commanded to remove them, and the captains were ready to enforce their command by having guns in readiness for firing. Way was then reluctantly made; but so little pleased were the Americans with their general manner that they seriously thought of uniting the other tribes against the Sioux.

In pleasing contrast they found the disposition of the Aricaras; these were exceedingly friendly, and administered a pretty strong rebuke to the Americans; who, in order to cement the growing amity, offered the chiefs liquor, which the Indians declined with the remark that they "were surprised that the Great Father should present them a liquor that made them fools." They also adverted to the affair again, saying that no man could be "really a friend who would lead them into such folly." They were the less corrupted native Indians, whose tastes and feelings are much more humane than those degraded by the vices of civilization. On another occasion,

when, according to military law of the time, one of the soldiers was flogged, the Aricara chief showed his humane feeling by crying aloud at the sight:—" Among his people," he said, " not even a child was whipped." Punishment by death was sometimes necessary, he admitted; but the degradation of whipping seemed insufferable. It is gratifying to know that since his time flogging has been abolished from both naval and military discipline; our code of civilization having at last reached in this respect the uncorrupted feeling of the savage. The Indians were agriculturists, cultivating corn, beans, squashes, watermelons, and a kind of tobacco peculiar to themselves. They were also, like the most of Indians, myth-makers; a rather plaintive story being told of three rocks, that had been long ago a lover and his sweetheart, but were separated by unwilling parents; the former going to the fields to grieve, and being accompanied by his faithful dog; and the latter being driven by her sorrow to the same spot, where, as an everlasting monument of their faithfulness, lover and dog and sweetheart were changed to stone, to be thus eternally together.

The Aricaras were at war with the Mandans: at a formal meeting of the tribe this was deprecated by the Americans, and it was declared to be the will of the Great Father that all his children should dwell together in peace; that wars should end, and the causes be avoided by all; that they should no longer perish, but increase in numbers. Presents were given



the chiefs, and to the tribe as a whole was presented a steel flouring mill, with which they were greatly pleased. The condition of war was found to be chronic; the principal cause being the stealing of slaves, or of horses, or, most offensive of all, of girls. The offended tribe then took up the quarrel until damage equal to that received had been inflicted. But as this could never be agreed upon the feuds continued from generation to generation. A class of young men devoted to avenging wrongs, and supporting the chiefs without question, had arisen; they were sworn, among their other duties, never to turn back from any course once taken, or fear any enemy. They carried their vows sometimes to the point of absurdity. One case is mentioned of a band of twenty that were crossing the river on the ice; the leader incautiously came against a hole, which he would not pass around, but kept his course, going in and drowning; all but two of his followers went in and disappeared under the ice; and the two were saved only by their friends seizing them—such, at least, is the story, but may have originated in a Frenchman's burlesque. However, a band of twenty-two were said to have died in a hopeless battle, except four who were carried off by their friends.

After the middle of October the rising winds and first snows of that stern climate warned the Americans that the river would soon fill with ice, and that they must provide for winter. Reaching the villages of the Mandans on the 20th, where the Aricara chief

was well received, and every prospect of peace was indicated, the boats were hauled up, and a site selected.

The Mandans proved very friendly, supplying the travelers all the season with corn, and assisting in the buffalo hunting—as these animals still lingered to some extent in the bottoms to browse; as did also deer and elk. The winter proved cold, the thermometer dropping as low as thirty-eight below zero on a number of days. With excursions out upon the prairies, occasional gala days with the Indians, and observation of holidays like Christmas, when the men enjoyed a small allowance of grog, the time wore on. Acquaintance was made with the various tribes of Indians who were all enemies of the Sioux, and peace was formed between them. The boat had been sent back, and new ones were made for use the next season. The Northwesters of Canada learned of the expedition, and both McCracken and Mackenzie, of that Canadian company, visited them. It was stated also that the Sioux were furnished with arms by the Northwesters to carry on war against the Chippeways; and the Americans thought it advisable to promise the Mandans protection from their enemies.

At this winter fort was acquired the family that proved of so much service the next season. This was Chaboneau, who had been living with the Minneterres, above the Mandans, and his Shoshone wife, Sacajawea; and their child. Sacajawea had been captured as a child and made a slave, and was bought

by the Frenchman; and although but young when leaving the Rocky Mountains still remembered much of the country.

April came in with fine weather, and by the seventh all was ready for a movement. The large boat was to return down the river, taking an Aricara chief and four men to visit the President; and various articles from the Indian country for Washington. The advance party, who were ready and shoved off in the stream at five o'clock, consisted of thirty-two, including Chaboneau and his wife and child, and a Mandan Indian, who wished to go to the country of the Shoshones and make an agreement of peace. The party with its baggage was accommodated in two large pirogues and six small canoes. The start was made in the face of a high northwest wind, which allowed but four miles progress before camping time; though otherwise the weather was fine. The barge, manned with seven soldiers and Mr. Gravelines as pilot, and bearing the presents and despatches, started down the river the same day.

The work of Lewis and Clark, and their company, for the second season was almost entirely exploring, intercourse with the Indians being on the western stretch chiefly for food and shelter; the negotiation of trade and arrangement of peace treaties between warring tribes being ended as they passed from the boundaries of the inhabited plains. Indeed, from the country of the Mandans to that of the Shoshones, west of the Rocky Mountains, no Indians were seen.



Being thus unimpeded by long delays with Indian tribes, and speech-making, the progress of the party was much more rapid the second season. Points of particular interest passed were the mouth of the Yellowstone River, Marias River, the Gates of the Rocky Mountains, the Three Forks, and the summit of the Continental Divide.

Although April began with favorable days, and the ice disappeared from the Missouri, and the young grass quickly clothed the landscape with its delicate green, especially where the Indians had burned over the old growth, and here the buffaloes flocked to browse, May came in with a reverse current, and snow was seen covering the herbage, and ice gathered one-quarter an inch thick in their kettles. On the 26th of April the mouth of the stream, called by the French Roche Jaune, or as they translated it Yellowstone, was passed, and they learned that it rose near the sources of the Platte and Missouri, and might be navigated in canoes almost to its head. As the Indians told them "It runs through a mountainous country, but which in many parts is fertile and well timbered; it then waters a rich, delightful land, broken into valleys and meadows, and well supplied with wood and fresh water, till it reaches near the Missouri, open meadows and low ground." Indeed the ample bottoms, the recurving hills, or broken edges of the vast undulating plain, and the second bench, with abundance of timber and game, suggested here an ideal place for a trading post. The explorers

were ever on the lookout for such locations, being impressed at Milk River, which they reached May 8th, that here was a route to the Northwest that might lead to control of the fur trade as far as "Athabasky." Day after day was passed through "country beautiful in the extreme," although as they proceeded the river narrowed, and presented a current often so strong as to require use of the towline along the shore; the hills "precipitated themselves into the river," and rose ever higher and higher, and on their summits appeared tufts of pine. Evidences of a sharp climate were seen in that as late as May 23d there was severe frost, and water froze on the oars; and on the next morning ice an eighth of an inch thick formed in the kettles. May 26th was distinguished by the first sight of the Rocky Mountains; Captain Lewis made an ascent to the top of some hills on the north side of the river, and from these elevations commanded a clear prospect of its course for fifty miles, sunken between the now heavily rolling uplands, which were comparatively barren in appearance; and above these, still westward, an irregular range of mountains spread itself from west to northwest. To the northward of these some still higher points appeared above the horizon, gleaming with snow, and were evidently of the great divide separating the waters of the Missouri and the Columbia. The change in climate and in the general appearance of the country is noticed, as the more broken lands are reached. The appeal to the imagination that the

shapes of stone on the bluff sides were making is well shown in the following:—"These hills and river cliffs exhibit a most extraordinary and romantic appearance. They rise in most places nearly perpendicularly from the river, to the height of between two and three hundred feet, and are formed of very white sandstone, so soft as to yield readily to the action of water, but in the upper part of which lie imbedded two or three thin horizontal strata of white freestone unaffected by the rain; and on the top is a dark rich loam, which forms a gradually ascending plain, from a mile to a mile and a half in extent, when the hills again rise abruptly to the height of about three hundred feet more. In trickling down the cliff the water has worn the soft sandstone into a thousand grotesque figures, among which, with a little fancy, may be discerned elegant ranges of freestone buildings, with columns variously sculptured, and supporting long and elegant galleries, while the parapets are adorned with statuary. On a nearer approach they represent every form of archaic ruins; columns, some with pedestals and capitals entire, others mutilated and prostrate, and some rising pyramidally over each other till they terminate in a sharp point. These are varied by niches, alcoves, and the customary appearances of desolated magnificence. The delusion is increased by the number of martens which have built their globular nests in the niches, and hover over these columns, as in our country they are accustomed to frequent large stone structures."



Indeed the marvels of the mountains were just beginning to open here; with their architectural contrivances, such as indeed in ancient lands taught man about all he has learned of structural art; and here impressed the explorers as if endeavoring to communicate some of their secret knowledge, so that they say "As we advance there seems no end to the visionary enchantment that surrounds us," and then describe the dikes of trap, or of basalt, forming vast ranges of walls.

On June 2d in a violent storm of wind succeeded by rain they reached the mouth of the Maria's. It became here a nice point to decide which of the two rivers was the Missouri. Both the captains were fully aware of the trouble that would arise if they took the wrong course; remarking, "if after ascending to the Rocky Mountains, or beyond them, we should find that the river we were following did not come near the Columbia, and be obliged to return, we should not only lose the traveling season, but dishearten the men." A party was sent to explore each river, and while they were gone the two captains went together up onto the high grounds, overlooking the vast plain, spread here in every direction, over which the buffalo herds were roaming, attended by their enemies the wolves; they also saw again the Rocky Mountains, the nearer ranges being spotted with snow, while beyond rose much higher ridges, perfectly white. As the exploring parties returned without anything satisfactory, the two captains decided

to make a reconnoissance in person. Lewis took the northern fork, and became convinced that its course led farther north than the route which he wished to follow. In this his judgment was good. On the return he narrowly escaped falling over a bluff 90 feet high into the river; and had just recovered himself when he heard his companion shout, and saw him in precisely the same predicament, but coolly told the man to cut footholes with his knife, and soon both were on safe ground. A pretty bit of sentiment in Lewis was naming the stream for a young lady, to whose gentleness and beauty, however, this turbid torrent from the Rockies bore little resemblance. Hence the name, which was originally Maria's River.

An old boatman of the party, named Charatte, not being satisfied that the southern arm was the true Missouri, Lewis decided to explore this branch himself. On reaching the highland even grander views than before of the Rocky Mountains were presented, and in crossing the plain some of those singular flat-topped hills were seen that have impressed all travelers; and the question was at last decided by the roar of the Great Falls of the Missouri, seven miles distant. A picturesque description of this fall is given, which lack of space alone forbids quoting here. These falls are among the finest in the world, though not comparing in height with the Great Shoshone Falls. In this region were encountered some of the wonders of the mountains, one of which all but swept away Chaboneau and Sacajawea, and Clark himself.

This was a cloudburst, which filled the gully in which these three—and the Chaboneau baby—had taken refuge, to a depth of fifteen feet with a raging torrent that bore down rocks and earth, and came with such suddenness that there was not a moment to be lost in escaping by clambering out up the canyon wall; Clark first saw the peril, and lifted the woman from below, while the Frenchman, too much excited to act coolly, dragged her as well as he could from above; she was encumbered with her child. Another of the wonders here noticed was the booming of the mountains, heard in the ranges to the northwest, and said by the watermen to be the explosion of veins of silver in the depths of the rock strata. These noises are described by the explorers:—"Since our arrival at the falls we have repeatedly heard strange noises coming from the mountains a little to the north of west. It is heard at different times of the day or night (sometimes when the air is perfectly still and without a cloud), and consists of one stroke only, or of five or six discharges in quick succession. It is loud and resembles precisely the sound of a piece of ordnance at the distance of three miles." It is said that these mysterious noises are still heard. Certainly the falls, aggregating a descent of four hundred feet, and which no white man had ever seen before; the violence of nature as now shown in the cloudbursts, and the winds rushing from the mountains to the plains; the unaccountable noises in the mountains far to the northwest; and the now con-



stant sight of the mountains themselves, which to the north and northwest were still covered with snow, and glistened with great beauty "when the sun shone upon them, and from this glittering appearance most probably have derived the name of the Shining mountains," were calculated to weave those subtle emotions of awe and dread that drove savages and many of the earlier explorers back to scenes less strange. But here was a spirit that did not yield to impalpable influences, and although curiously noting all these facts, the explorers simply pressed westward.

On the 15th of July they reached what they very appropriately called The Gates of the Rocky Mountains; where "for five and three-quarter miles these rocks rise perpendicularly from the water's edge to the height of nearly twelve hundred feet. They are composed of black granite near their base, but from the lighter color above, and from the fragments, we suppose the upper part to be flint of a yellowish-brown and cream color. Nothing can be imagined more tremendous than the frowning darkness of these rocks, which project over the river and menace us with destruction. The river, one hundred and fifty yards in width, has forced its channel down this solid mass; but so reluctantly has it given way, that during the whole distance the water is very deep even at the edges, and for the first three miles there is not a spot, except for a few yards, in which a man could stand between the water and the towering perpendicular of the mountain."

Fortunately through this remarkable passageway the water was found not too swift for overcoming the current with the oars; as neither pole nor towline, their resource in swift water, would have been any use here; and as it was, it was not until after dark—and a very great darkness in the narrow canyon—that a spot sufficient to allow camping grounds was found.

A milder and more beautiful scene was that at the Three Forks, which was reached on July 27th, and all this was new to the sight of the white man. It is a region of surpassing loveliness, and from the hill-tops inclosing the now broadened plain, more minute views were ever in sight of the mountains whose summits were Alpine in appearance. The little party of Americans, with representatives of several European nations, and of the red and black races also, were carrying here a greater fortitude, and a greater fate, indeed, than those of the ancient conqueror, who with a hundred thousand men behind him, must raise their drooping courage with the reflection "Their tops do not reach to heaven." Clark here went ahead, anxious to find traces of the Shoshones, and learn from them the best passes. With so many interesting objects to designate these three almost equal branches were named respectively the Gallatin, Madison, and the Jefferson. It was determined to follow the latter, or westernmost, as its sources could hardly fail to lead to the springs of the Columbia on the western side of the chain.

The toils up the Jefferson fork, with Lewis for the most part going ahead to look out a route, and leaving directions on poles at the forks of the streams, a green sapling in one case being cut down by a beaver, and pole and note thus carried off, can be only hinted at. But at last on August 12th the continental divide was reached by Lewis, still scouting ahead. He was following an Indian road, upon which tracks were seen, and he was anxious to overtake the party, and assure them of friendship. As he pursued this track the narrative says:—"The road was still plain, and as it led directly toward the mountains, the stream gradually became smaller, till, after their advancing two miles further, it had so greatly diminished in width that one of the men in a fit of enthusiasm, with one foot on each side of the rivulet, thanked God that he had lived to bestride the Missouri. As they proceeded their hope of soon seeing the waters of the Columbia rose to almost painful anxiety; when at the distance of four miles from the last abrupt turn of the stream, they reached a small gap, formed by the high mountains which recede on either side, leaving room for the Indian road. From the foot of one of the lowest of these mountains, which rises with a gentle ascent of about half a mile, issues the remotest water of the Missouri.

"They had now reached the hidden sources of that river which had never before been seen by civilized man; and as they quenched their thirst at the chaste and icy fountain—as they sat down by the brink of



that little rivulet, which yielded its distant and modest tribute to the parent ocean, they felt themselves rewarded for all their labors and difficulties. They left reluctantly this interesting spot, and, pursuing the Indian road through the interval of the hills, arrived at the top of a ridge from which they saw high mountains, partially covered with snow, still to the west of them. The ridge on which they stood formed the dividing line between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. They followed a descent much steeper than on the eastern side, and at the distance of three-quarters of a mile reached a handsome, bold creek of cold clear water, running to the westward. They stopped to taste for the first time the waters of the Columbia; and after a few minutes followed the road across steep hills and low hollows, when they came to a spring on the side of the mountain. Here they found a sufficient quantity of dry willow brush for fuel, and therefore halted for the night."

The main concern now with Captain Lewis and his little squad, as the main party under Clark was still behind, and toiling with the canoes up the dwindling waters of the Jefferson, or Red Rock, was to come upon the Indians, whose tracks they still followed, in such a way as not to startle them, or be taken for enemies before their pacific disposition could be known. While still upon the Missouri side, Lewis had sighted one lone Indian who he saw at a distance through his glass was not of any tribe eastward, and that he concluded must be a Shoshone. The Indian

was mounted upon a fine horse, and observed the captain at almost the same instant. Lewis advanced alone, his two men being at some distance behind, until as near as he dared approach without startling the Shoshone; then unfolded a blanket, held it over his head, and laid it on the ground, which is the universal sign of peace. He also laid aside his gun, and was about to go nearer, when the two men, Drewyer and Shields, came in view; Lewis was fearful of startling the Indian by shouting to them to halt, but beckoned the sign of peace, and laid some trinkets on the blanket. The Indian, however, kept his eye on the two soldiers, whose stupidity was not a little annoying. Drewyer soon caught the idea and halted, but Shields came forward thoughtlessly, and the Indian wheeled and disappeared in the bushes.

Early the next morning, after crossing the divide, Lewis started in search of the Shoshones again, taking the Indian road which led westerly through an open broken country, being pleased with finding honeysuckles in bloom. "They proceeded along a waving plain parallel to the valley for some four miles," the journey continues, "when they discovered two women, a man, and some dogs on an eminence at the distance of a mile before them." Lewis was seen and watched with close attention, and went forward until within half a mile; then ordering his men to halt, and laying down his knapsack, unfurled a flag, also a sign of peace, and went forward alone. The women soon retreated; the man remained until

Lewis was within a hundred yards, and then followed the women. The dogs alone were left. Thinking still to make some use of the incident the captain went to the place, and tried to catch a dog and tie a trinket about its neck; but this the animal would not allow, and it too soon disappeared.

Calling his men the captain began again following the trail, which was now much worn and dusty as from recent travel. In about a mile they came suddenly upon three women, from whom they had been concealed by a deep ravine in which the road wound. One of the women, who was young, instantly took to flight; the others, an old woman and little girl, thinking escape impossible, crouched and held their heads down, as if reconciled to the speedy death that they supposed awaited them. "Captain Lewis instantly put down his rifle and advancing toward them took the woman by the hand, raised her up, and repeated the words *tabba bone*, the Shoshone for white man." He also rolled up his sleeve to show her his white skin, as his face and hands were now so much tanned as to differ little from the color of the Indians'. She was instantly relieved and her fears were changed to great confidence when given some beads and awls, and pewter mirrors, and paint—articles of great worth to the Indian. Lewis was afraid now that the young woman would reach the camp and give an alarm, and told the older one to call her; which was done, and the younger came back almost at once much out of breath, but dazzled by the pres-



ents, and wondering at the kindness of the strangers. She was given the same as the others, and then the faces of all three were painted vermilion by the captain, in sign of peace.

After the women had become sufficiently composed, and certainly they acted very intelligently, they were informed by signs that the white men wished to go to their camp; and they were willing at once to show the way. After going two miles along the road down the river they were met by a party of sixty Indians, in full war dress, well-armed, and mounted on fine horses, coming at full speed. Lewis at once laid down his gun, halted his two men, and taking the flag advanced to meet them alone. To the chief, who with two companions was riding ahead, the women now began telling that the strangers were white men, and with great exultation showed their presents. This was understood immediately, and the three leaders dismounting embraced Lewis, laying their cheeks against his, and shouting "We are rejoiced, we are rejoiced." The spirit of their salutation was, however, more agreeable to the captain than the manner, as their war paint was well distributed over his face. However, he had every reason to be rejoiced also that his patience and address had at last won the hearty good will of a people upon whose friendship he must now rely implicitly in completing his passage of the mountains. The Indians also had great reason for thankfulness that the strangers, whose presence had been reported by the man seen

on the headwaters of the Missouri, were whites, and not the dreaded Miniteres, or Pahkees, who had only the year before made an incursion and defeated them in a hard fight—being better armed.

## CHAPTER VII

FROM THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS TO THE SEA





THE passage from the head of the Missouri to the navigable waters of the Columbia proved to be the critical period of the journey. This was due primarily to the difficult nature of the country, and the scarcity of food; and also, though not intentionally on their part, the uncertain temper of the Indians. The details of this remarkable trip, which fascinates all who carefully examine the record, and can be appreciated only from a close reading of the complete journals, must be brushed over here and only the largest outlines noticed.

After reaching a friendly understanding, as described in the last chapter, with the chief of the Shoshones, whose name was Cameahwait, Lewis at length broached the subject of the larger party of white men approaching in canoes up the Missouri, and the reasons for their coming; which was that the Great Father at Washington wished to send his good-will to his Brothers in the West, and would trade with them for their furs the beads and blankets and cloths that the Indians all prized, and got now only occasionally from the white men at the great stinking lake—or ocean; and also would give them the guns and ammunition that would enable them to hunt the buffalo and be on an equality with the Sioux of the Plains, or the Blackfeet. He also thought it proper to tell him of the woman of their race who was returning with the boats to her people, and stimulated his curiosity by telling of the man they had

with them, who was perfectly black, and not painted. He said that if the Shoshones would go to the forks of the Missouri with their horses and bring the whites with their goods into their country, they should then trade and buy horses for the trip to the westward.

To all this Cameahwait readily agreed, and assembled his band, but when time for starting came next morning, but half a dozen of his people were ready to follow; and these only by the appeal of the chief, who was himself forced to his promise by Lewis saying that he understood that he was a brave man, and did not fear to die. Their reluctance arose from the whisper that, after all, this white man, whom they had never known before, might be in league with the dreaded Pahkees, and was but enticing them out of their haunts, to be surrounded and killed. When the chief, therefore, with half a dozen of his men, adhered to his word and started away the whole tribe began wailing and mourning as if the devoted band had already been led to hopeless sacrifice. But these had not gone far with Lewis before a number more began following, and in a short time the whole band came; and instead of wailing their spirits were suddenly changed, and they advanced shouting and singing without a sign of fear or a thought of danger. This tribe was bitterly poor, having been robbed the year before; and were now almost destitute of food. Half a day they attempted to catch antelope without success; and so great was their hunger that when



at length Drewyer shot a deer the entire band went on the run to the spot, tearing the animal, the most of which was given to them, in pieces, eating it raw, and consuming even the entrails.

Seeing their changeable temper Lewis, as the party neared the forks of the Missouri, stated more particularly to Cameahwait that it might be that Clark and the boats would not yet be there; he must not be disappointed, as the water was very bad. This threw the Shoshones into consternation. The doubtful ones, who had already thought their chief was reposing too much confidence in the word of a stranger, declared that all was now plain. They were but being enticed further and further into the enemy's country, and would soon be surprised and unable to defend themselves. In this strait Lewis showed great heroism, and cool judgment. He told Cameahwait that it was thought disgraceful in a white man to lie, even to an enemy; much more to a friend; Clark would surely be at the forks, or but a short distance below; the white men were anxious to bring good-will and open trade, and would not throw away all their hopes by deception. He then gave the chief his gun and ammunition, and told him he might kill him any time if it proved that he had spoken an untruth. By this the chief was reassured, and held his band together, who proceeded, and on the morning reached the forks. They found none of the boats there; but Lewis had retained the mastery of the Indians;

and with no great show of fear they followed his lead further.

The meeting with the boats soon after was a great relief to Lewis; and was very dramatic to the Indians. Sacajawea was among the first at the boats to detect the Shoshones appearing over the brows of the mountains. She soon saw that they were her tribe, and danced with delight, sucking her fingers to show that they were her people, and when they came near ran among them, recognizing first a young woman about her own age, who had been taken captive at the same time, but had been returned. In the chief she soon knew her brother, whom she met with all the transports that any woman would feel under the same circumstances; and he was nearly as much affected. To her sorrow, however, she learned that all her family, except this and another member, were no longer living. It was only as interrupted by tears that she could interpret—this becoming now very necessary. The complete confirmation of all that Lewis had said, and especially the great praise that his sister bestowed upon the white men, the Americans, restored all the first confidence of Cameahwait, and in turn raised him greatly in the estimation of his tribe. Horses were easily obtained now to pack the goods from the canoes over the mountains to the navigable streams of the Columbia, and an old man was found who said that he could guide them.

Lewis thought it possible that a practicable route might be found on the Salmon River. The old In-

dian said that this was impassable; that after entering lofty mountains the rivers became so violent as to be white with foam for twenty miles, and then entered country so difficult that none of them had ever, in all man's remembrance, traversed it. After a thorough reconnoissance Clark found the old guide's story amply confirmed, following the mad stream until he saw it enter the mountain canyon, whiten with foam, and then disappear in a chain beyond which rose terrific mountains still white with snow. The advice to try a river much farther to the north was adopted, and that very wisely; and the party, with the Indians still accompanying, prepared to cross a high and difficult divide to reach the headwaters of Clark's Fork, or the Bitter Root. Here Sacajawea was again of great assistance. She revealed to the captains that her brother intended leaving them here, and assembling his tribe to hunt buffalo on the Missouri. This was a violation of his agreement, as he had promised to see them onto the Bitter Root. Lewis at once charged him with this intent, before the two other chiefs; these declared they had no such thought, but the proposition to hunt buffalo now was Cameahwait's alone. After a short silence he admitted this; urging that the season was late and without buffalo meat his people must starve; and that the tribes of the Flatheads were already assembling, and his people must go now, or not at all. The captains suspected that there was an object in detaining them, so as to keep among them the



whites for protection, and to consume their goods; and pressed the promise of the chief directly upon him. He renewed his agreement, and saw the party safely onto the Bitter Root, in the deep valley known as Ross' Hole later, and then with some of the Flatheads went for buffalo. This was the only real breach of his word—or contemplated breach, that this chief showed; and the honorableness of all his dealings, and of his whole tribe, impressed the Americans deeply. Only one article was lost, a hatchet, which was returned by the Indians. Indeed the Shoshones, in spite of their constant privations and miseries, and losses by war, impressed the Americans as peculiarly manly. Their only reason for not coping with the Blackfeet and Sioux was inferiority of numbers and arms. Among these Indians, as among the Aricaras, whipping of children was not practised; as it broke the spirit of the child.

Our natural curiosity to know how the Lewis and Clark party was regarded by the Indians themselves, when first seen, has fortunately been gratified to some extent by publication of two stories, or historical legends, still surviving among the Flatheads and the Nez Percés. In the beautiful valley of the Bitter Root, with the swiftly gliding stream that was named Clark's Fork, the tribe who made themselves known as Ootlashoots, but now called Flatheads, for no other reason apparently than that they do not flatten the head, was met, and proved entirely friendly. The meeting is somewhat briefly described by the ex-

plorers as follows:—" We pursued the course of the stream for three miles till it emptied itself into a river from the east. In the wide valley at their junction we discovered a large encampment of Indians, and on reaching them and alighting from our horses we were received with much cordiality. A council was immediately assembled, white robes were thrown over our shoulders, and the pipe of peace was introduced. After this ceremony, as it was too late to go any farther, we encamped, and continued smoking and conversing with the chiefs until a late hour."

In the Indian account many more details are noticed, and shows with what importance much that goes with the whites as trifling is carefully observed by the native as giving a clue to character or purpose. Their story is as follows, as recounted to a priest by an old Indian woman of the tribe named Agnes:—" The Flathead Indians were camping one day at Ross' Hole, or Ross' Fork, at the head of Bitter Root Valley, when one day the old chief Three Eagles, the father of chief Victor, and grandfather of Carlos, left the camp to go scouting the country, fearing that there might be some Indian enemy about to steal the horses, as was done very frequently. He saw at a distance Lewis and Clark's party, about twenty men, each man leading two pack horses, except two, who were riding ahead, who were Lewis and Clark. The old chief seeing that these men wore no blankets, did not know what to think of them. It was the first time he had seen men without blankets; what kind of be-

ings could they be? The first thought was that they were a party who, traveling, had been robbed by some Indians. He went back to his people and reporting what he had seen, gave orders that the horses should be driven in and watched. He then went back toward the party of strange beings, and hiding in the timber, watched them. When they came to the open prairie he noticed that they traveled slowly and unconcerned, all together, the two leaders going ahead and looking around, as if surveying the country, and consulting with their men. He thought: These must be two chiefs; but what can they be after? To make things more complicated for the chief, there was a colored man in the party. What could this man be? When the Indians go to the buffalo country they have a custom, if any sign of an enemy appears, to have a war dance, to encourage one another to fight and be brave. For this dance the Indian warriors would paint themselves, some in red, some in yellow, some in black, etc., and from the color each had chosen to paint himself his name was called. This black face, thought the old chief, must surely be a man who painted his face black in sign of war. The party must have had a fight with some hostile Indians and escaped from their enemies, losing only their blankets. Seeing that the strangers were traveling toward his camp, the old chief went back to his people and told them to keep quiet and wait for the party to come near. From the easy and unconcerned way the strange beings were traveling the



Indians inferred that they had no intention of fighting or doing them injury. Hence when they saw the strangers advancing in the sane manner, toward them, and were already near their camp, the Indians did not move, but kept watching.

“ When the two leaders of the party, arriving at the Indian camp, showed friendship, there was a universal shaking of hands. The chief then gave orders to bring in the best buffalo hides, for each man to sit on, and the best buffalo robes also, for each man to use as a blanket. Then the two leaders, observing that the Indians were using for smoking the leaves of some plant, a plant very much alike to our tobacco plant, asked for some, and filled their pipes. But as soon as they tried to smoke they pronounced the Indian tobacco no good; and cutting some of their own kind of tobacco, gave it to the Indians, telling them to fill their pipes with it. But it was too much for them, who had never tried the American weed, and all began to cough, with great delight to the party. Then the two leaders asked for some Kinnekanick, mixed it with the tobacco, and gave again the prepared weed to smoke. This time the Indians found it excellent, and in their way thanked the men, whom they now believed a friendly party. On their side the whites, seeing the friendly dispositions of the Indians, decided to camp right there, and they began to unpack their horses, giving the Indians to understand that they also had blankets in their packs, but they used them only to sleep in, and gave

them back the robes. The Indians were soon out of their wits when they saw some of the men packing on their shoulders some pretty good-sized logs for their camp fires, and conceived a great idea of the power of the white man. All went friendly, and after three days they started off, directed to Lolo Forks trail by the Indians, as the best way to go to the Nez Perces' country."

The above is as written for the *Western Wonderland*, for 1900, by Father Daste, of the Kalispel Mission. The extreme liberality of the Flatheads in giving each of the party of Americans two of their best buffalo robes, simply because they had been attacked and robbed; and that no thought seems to have occurred to the chief that he might attack and rob them of the rest of their belongings, including the horses, of which no Indians ever had enough, is good indication of the disposition even at that time of this brave and high-minded people.

The Old Shoshone and his son; and Sacajawea, still continued with Lewis and Clark, and after three days' rest and recuperation on the banks of the Bitter Root, they were ready to turn westward. The old guide said that he did not know where the river they were now on might lead, and it was necessary to cross the main chain of the Bitter Root Mountains, which are in reality but the Western Cordillera of the Rockies themselves. They were high and stony, and for a time it seemed as if they would prove too much for the little party. The rocks were so jagged

as to cut and cripple the horses' feet. The ascents were so steep in places as to baffle the animals, which, if forced along, were in imminent peril of losing footing entirely and sliding off the perilous cliffs into the gorges below—as did actually happen in several cases. Packs were also turned, and horses fell with, or upon, their loads. Although but September, in that high altitude the air was like winter, the rocks being coated with ice every morning, and storms of snow and sleet one or two days, so obscuring the path with the fresh fall as to give no sign of the trail except where the passing animals had left indications on the low boughs of the stunted timber. For a day or two the situation seemed critical in the extreme, progress seeming almost out of question, and to return and attempt to winter in the mountains seeming equally demoralizing. Food became low, the last slices of pork, which had been kept as the last resource disappearing, and game ever since entering these high and barren mountains being scarce and shy.

After eating horse meat a number of days Captain Clark decided to go forward with six of the hunters, and obtain game if possible, as the men were becoming weak from fasting, or sick with dysentery. The journal says:—"September 20th. Captain Clark went on through a country as rugged as before, till on passing a low mountain, at the distance of four miles he came to the forks of a large creek. Down this he proceeded south 60 degrees west two miles,



then turning to the right continued over a dividing ridge, where were the heads of several little streams, and at twelve miles' distance descended the last of the Rocky Mountains, and reached the level country. A beautiful open plain, partially supplied with pine, now presented itself. After proceeding five miles he discovered three Indian boys, who observing the party ran off and hid themselves in the grass. Captain Clark immediately alighted, and giving his horse and gun to one of the men went after the boys. He soon relieved their apprehensions and sent them forward to the village, about a mile off, with presents of small pieces of riband. Soon after the boys reached home a man came out, but with great caution; he conducted them to a large tent in the village, and all the inhabitants gathered around to view with a mixture of fear and pleasure the wonderful strangers. The conductor now informed Captain Clark that the spacious tent he was in was the residence of the great chief, who had set out three days ago, with all the warriors, to attack some of their enemies toward the southwest; that he would not return before fifteen or eighteen days, and that in the meantime there were only a few men left to guard the women and children. The Indians now set before them (Captain Clark and his six men) a small piece of buffalo meat, some dried salmon, berries, and several kinds of roots. Among these last was one that was round, much like an onion in appearance, and sweet to the taste; its name is *quamash*, and it is eaten either in its natural state,

boiled into a kind of a soup, or made into a cake, when it is called *pasheco*. After their long abstinence this was a sumptuous treat. They returned the kindness of the people by a few small presents, and then went on, in company with one of the chiefs, to a second village in the same plain, at a distance of two miles. Here they were treated with great kindness, and passed the night. The hunters were sent out, but though they saw some tracks of deer, were unable to procure anything."

The Indian story of this meeting with the first white men has been preserved, and was published in the "Oregon Historical Quarterly," as written by Miss Kate Macbeth, of Lapwai. There is not the slightest doubt of the accuracy of Miss Macbeth's rendition of the story, or that it is now current and fully believed by the Nez Perces, though there is a touch of romance about it that suggests to the skeptical reader or critical historian that it was of imaginative origin. Our judgment, however, is that it is substantially true. The devout Indians consider the appearance of the white men as Providential, and it is certain that they became from that day the fast friends of the whites, and as we shall see in the later development but for this friendship the occupation of Oregon by the Americans would have more than once been attended with difficulties that might have proved insuperable to any force that the Americans would have been able at the time to bring to bear. In the valuable account of the Lewis and Clark expedi-

tion in *Western Wonderland*, before alluded to—though having some surprising inaccuracies—not full justice is done to the steadfast friendship of the Nez Perces; it is there said:—"With, I think, but one exception, these royal representatives of the red race have always proved as friendly to the whites as Lewis and Clark found them. That exception was in 1877, when from the general region of Lewis and Clark's camp of the Chopunnish\* of 1806, Chief Joseph began the Nez Perce war." As is well known, Chief Joseph's band was but a small part of the Nez Perce tribe, who as a people remained friendly and gave valuable assistance as scouts to the United States officers; and also that Joseph was not from the region of the Chopunnish camp, but from Wal-lowa Valley in Oregon; though his first attacks were made in Idaho. The main Nez Perce nation whom Lewis and Clark describe, has without any exception remained faithful to the Americans; and the beginning of it, according to their own story, dated back even of Lewis and Clark, although they were profoundly affected by finding that these captains were as honorable and well disposed as reported by the woman who first brought them word of the whites.

The story, as written by Miss Macbeth, is as follows:

"The Lolo trail is a very old one, and was used before there were any whites in the country to help

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\* The camp of the "Chopunnish" was made on the return journey, 1806.



make it. It was over this that Lewis and Clark came into the Weippe country. Later it was improved considerably by the whites, and for a time was better than another sometimes used, called the Elk City trail; which is also a very old one.

“ In olden times the buffalo country in Montana was the camping ground of all the tribes far and near. There many battles were fought among themselves, and those taken captive were claimed as slaves by the victors. A Nez Perce woman, Watkuese [Wat-kû-ese] was taken captive by a tribe, who, on their return to their own land, fought with another tribe, and the Nez Perce woman was again captured, and carried further and further away; and it was while there (thus far removed from her own country) she, the first Nez Perce to do so, looked upon a white face. We are inclined to think she must have been taken near the Red River settlement, because she saw corn in the land to which she was carried. Sometime afterward, having upon her back a child which she had borne, she made her escape from her Indian masters, and along her roaming way from them met with much kindness from the whites, whom she called So-yah-po,\* or the Crowned Ones (because of the hat). Her child died, and she buried it beside the trail in the Flathead country, which she had now reached on her journey homeward. There she was fortunate in finding some of the Nez Percés, who brought her home, a poor diseased woman. She had

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\* Also spelled Snapies.

much to tell of the strange people with the white eyes, who had been so kind to her.

“ Later this poor woman was with a great company of Nez Perces on their best camas ground, the Weippe, when Lewis and Clark with their company came in over the Lolo trail and surprised them there. Their first impulse was to kill them. Watkuese lay dying in her tent, but was told about the strange people who were now on the ground. She at once began to plead for them, saying, ‘ Do not harm them, for they are the crowned ones who were so kind to me; do not be afraid of them; go near to them.’

“ Cautiously they approached, and the whites shook their hands; this they had never seen before, and in surprise they said to one another, ‘ They dandle us.’ Watkuese died that same day, but had lived long enough to keep Lewis and Clark from being put to death by these naked savages, the Nez Perces. Their fear of the pale face soon vanished, and they became friends. Some of the Nez Perces guided them down into their beautiful Kamiah Valley, and on down the Clearwater River. At North Fork an Indian presented the white leaders with some very fine fish. Lewis, or Clark, carefully unrolled a package containing a piece of cloth, the first they had seen; they now think it was a flag; and tearing a red band from it wound it around the head of the man who had given the fish, and by this act the first Nez Perce chief was made. They separated at Lewiston, Lewis and Clark intrusting many things of value with them,

and found them safe when they returned the following year.”

There is no essential disaccordance between this story and the account of the explorers themselves; although to the Indians all seemed remarkable and the most trifling incidents were observed with closest attention—as whites themselves would undoubtedly narrowly watch and note down the minutest acts or words of new beings come among them without announcement, and of a character bordering on the supernatural.

The Nez Perces were found, on the whole, the most superior of any tribe, unless possibly some on the plains; being very reliable, generally amiable, and ready to assist. They were less mobile than the Shoshones, less ready to give without pay—although on a number of occasions showing remarkable liberality; and having a certain closeness in bargaining, and a surprising coolness of manner; characteristics still noticeable among them, although their sterling honesty was noted again and again. Indeed on their return one of the first of these Indians met was one bringing a canister of powder that had been cached, but scented and dug up by his dog.

The party now were readily guided down the river; and shown a place where cedar for canoes might be found, and assisted in making the craft. Two chiefs consented to guide the party down the Clearwater; continuing, indeed, as far as the Cascades. The horses and saddles were intrusted to the care of the



old chief, Twisted Hair, and were found in fairly good condition on the return. Indeed the next year considerable time was spent with the Nez Percés, waiting for the snow to melt on the Rockies, and with a few slight misunderstandings a very strong friendship was formed. Many acts of liberality are noticed, such as gifts of horses, though in general the bargaining character, and that closeness and imperturbability that is often seen in the Indian and non-plusses the white man, is spoken of as the prevailing sentiment.

Indications are seen in the journal, as the canoe voyage down the Clearwater to the Snake, and down the Snake to the Columbia, is recorded, of a satiety of grandeurs of scenery, and the weariness of body that leaves little strength for enjoyments of the mind. The mountains, or the broken edge of the great Palouse highland impending over the Clearwater and the Snake at Lewiston, which is ten times as high as the sandstone carved bluffs that were so admired on the Missouri, and more than twice the height of the walls of the Gates of the Rocky Mountains, are passed without notice. Even the dangers of the rivers, breaking often into rapids, are alluded to with nonchalance. At the union of the Snake, which by triangulation was found to be 570 yards wide, with the Columbia from the north, which was figured at 960 yards, spreading soon after their union to a width of two or three miles, the tone of the journal becomes more enthusiastic. The wonderful clearness

of the Columbia, which was called Clark's Fork, in which salmon swimming to the depth of twenty feet could be plainly seen, made a striking contrast to the wonderfully tinted Snake, then of the peculiarly greenish-blue tint that has so excited the enthusiasm of artists.

These were now the October days, the weather was fair, and indeed the heat ever since passing the Rockies was oppressive much of the time. Clark spent a day ascending the Columbia above its junction with the Snake, and found many Indians all busy gathering and drying salmon, of which immense quantities were seen in the river, and stranded on the shore; drifting down after spawning. Dog flesh, however, was generally preferred to the salmon, which was out of season, and not appetizing; though the Indians of the Columbia, unlike the Sioux, refuse to eat dog meat, and the Nez Perces even ridiculed the whites as eaters of dogs and horses.

Good progress was made down the now shrunken, but still great river of the West; many Indian tribes were passed, all busy taking salmon, and drying them on scaffolds over the river, and all friendly. The "Wallah Wallahs" were distinguished from the others, and the next year rendered efficient service in guiding the travelers over the hills to the Nez Perces. Mt. Adams, mistaken for Mt. St. Helens, was sighted on October 19th, correctly estimated at 150 miles distant—St. Helens itself being over 200; on the 19th a conical mountain, covered with snow, was seen at the

southwest, and as the Indian guides said this was near the falls which they called Tumtum, the name Timm Mountain was given to this snow peak; being, of course, Mt. Hood. This name, *tim*m, is a curious illustration, seen many times, of a misapprehension on the part of the whites; or a mere careless slip. The word, of course, is Tum-Tum. The name given to the Clearwater, Cooscoosky, was a mere word indicating water in general, as Indians had no names for running streams. Early writers, who have been copied even by scientific students, have reversed the names of the Indian deities of the Clatsops. The list of such mistakes might be indefinitely extended. An amusing incident occurred the day that Mt. Adams was seen. After shooting a white crane, Lewis, who was walking on the shore, entered the huts of some Indians; whom he found crouching in terror. They had heard the explosion of his gun, and seen something drop from the sky. Not until then had they seen him; who looked so strange, in white man's dress, with white skin and beard, that they at once concluded that it was he that had fallen from the sky; and it was some little time before they were recovered from their astonishment enough to be persuaded that he was a mortal.

On the 22d the mouth of the Deschutes River was passed, to which was given the rather formidable name of Towanihiooks; and soon was heard the roar of the great falls at Celilo. Great numbers of perfectly peaceable natives were found here catching and



drying fish, and stacks of pemmican were seen along the shore, awaiting final deposit in baskets. Among the multitude of Indians they found none unfriendly, and persuaded the Nez Perce guides to go to the village below, which these were at first very unwilling to do, as they were enemies. But a peace was arranged between the two, and no one was hurt; the chiefs returning to their own country on horseback. The Indians, as well as we who read of the exploit, were astonished to see the white men's canoes shoot through the rapids, and over the black waters of the whirlpool, but reaching at length the calm water below in safety. They found here also an entirely different language and people; the Chinook tribes, in fact, extending as far up as the Lower Dalles. This point became in later times a notoriously hard place, stealing being regularly practiced upon travelers. Though suffering some annoyances from this the explorers had little difficulty. Indeed they conducted the expedition here with the most consummate discretion, furnishing a model of what should have been the white man's course in every case. Always on guard and ready to repel any attack, they were equally careful not to provoke a quarrel, nor to offend the prejudices of the Indians; to consult first with the chiefs and place themselves confidently under their protection, and to scrupulously pay for all articles taken, and to religiously perform any agreement. The whole policy was to prevent trouble; and to adapt their intercourse to meet the Indians' notions

of honor. They did not have in all respects a moral class of men in their company, as a band of soldiers would hardly be expected to furnish an example of virtue, but even with such men the feelings of the Indians were not allowed to suffer outrage.

The course down from the Dalles to the Cascades was interrupted only by the high winds that rose in the afternoons, raising the now broad river to a sea white with waves; but on the second of November the Cascades were reached; called by the explorers not Cascades, but the Great Shoot; and below this they observed the influence of the tides. This told them that the long contest with broken water was now over, and that a route to the sea stretched unbroken before them. They had obtained now some canoes of Chinook construction, which struck them as models of beauty, and withstood the most dangerous seas.

Their progress down the lower river, however, although past the mountains and the rough water, was attended with other discomforts, of which the journals complain even more. These were high winds and rain; and at least one heavy shower of hail accompanied by lightning and heavy thunder. Well known points, such as Castle Rock and Rooster Rock, and the mouth of the Sandy River, or Quicksand, as they called it, are described. This latter is just opposite the point reached by Broughton, more than ten years before these Americans, and named for

Vancouver. Here the valley, more than sixty miles wide, was reached, and was described as that of the Columbia, being considered as drained by the Sandy—the Willamette not being seen until the return trip, and named the Multnomah. Many Indians were seen, but they were less friendly than above; or at least had had enough intercourse with whites to be less unsophisticated, and to place a greater value upon the articles carried by the explorers. Once the Wahkiakums attempted robbery.

On the 7th they were “at last presented with the glorious sight of the ocean—that ocean, the object of all our labors, and the reward of all our anxieties”—though properly speaking it was not the ocean, but the shining waters of the lower estuary, and the open gate leading to the ocean. But there were many difficulties, and hard winds before reaching the sea. At one point, for six days they were storm bound, and dared not venture on the boisterous river, though they saw the natives passing and repassing with impunity. One particularly disagreeable, or even dangerous night is mentioned which was passed encamped upon driftlogs under a clayey cliff. The tide rose, setting the logs afloat, and the erosion of the waves, mingled with the violent rain, loosened the earth and stones of the cliff, so that these came tumbling down. Indeed, the north shore from Cathlamet down, which they had inconsiderately taken, or had followed with the idea of reaching Cape Hancock, was too wild for men traveling in crafts of the size they had. How-



ever, Chinook Point was at last rounded; Cape Hancock was visited, and the Pacific was seen amid its waves and storms through the misty atmosphere. The weather beach was also visited from the land side. But after careful examination it was believed that a better location for passing the winter might be found on the south side. Being unacquainted with the manner of the storms in the winter season they were met by unexpected winds, and it was not until the 26th that the river was crossed. This was done above Tongue Point, reaching which they were storm bound for more than a week, and it was not until the 7th of December that a place chosen by Lewis for the winter quarters was reached by the entire party.

This was on a stream called by the Indians Netul—or rather called by the whites by that name from the Indian spot on the shore next its mouth. It is now known as the Lewis and Clark. This, no doubt, proved much more comfortable than any place on the north side; being more sheltered, and also affording good hunting for elk during the winter.

Upon the level of a hill about thirty feet elevation above the high tide was constructed a comfortable building, inclosed with stockade, and the winter was passed with little sickness or other serious misfortune. This was found to be a point well selected for the purposes of a winter encampment. Up the river, in the deep bottoms where the huckleberry bushes and brakes furnished abundant forage, were many herds of elk, and the slaughter of as many as eleven is

recorded for one day; though more than once such wholesale butchery proved an improvidence, the meat spoiling in the woods. It was also no great distance across the peninsula to the ocean beach, where there were the extensive Clatsop Plains, which were also visited by the elk, and by the deer. Geese and ducks frequented the many ponds of these sandy plains in great numbers; and in the streams falling into the ocean on that shore were many kinds of fish which were abundant in the winter. Besides this, somewhat to the southward, and across a stream now called the Necanicum, entering the ocean at the summer resort well known as Seaside, a suitable location was found for evaporating sea water to procure salt, of which their supply was exhausted. The most positive evidence left, in a monumental way, of the visit of the explorers is of the old salt cairn near the stony beach.

The winter months were worn slowly away in the routine of camp life, and in visits to the Clatsop Plains and the ocean beach, and in making an expedition during a brief interval of sunny weather over Tillamook Head, a high bold promontory that juts upon deep water entirely closing passage by the beach, onto the ocean shore beyond where a whale was stranded, and to which all the Indians were flocking to get some of the blubber and oil. On January 5, 1806, a party headed by Clark set out to see the whale, and get blubber, and had hardly started before Chaboneau and Sacajawea asked permission to

go also. Sacajawea made a very effective plea. The journal says:—"The poor woman stated very earnestly that she had traveled a long way with us to behold the great water, yet she had never been down to the coast; and now that this monstrous fish was also to be seen, it seemed hard that she should not be permitted to see the ocean or the whale. So reasonable a request could not be denied; they were therefore suffered to go with Captain Clark." From the top of Tillamook Head a view was obtained, in the clear January air of a sunny day, that moved even the enthusiasm of adventurers already sated with natural wonders. The journal says:—"Here one of the most delightful views in nature presented itself. Immediately in front was the ocean, breaking in fury on the coast, from the rocks of Cape Disappointment as far as the eye could discern to the northwest, and against the highlands and irregular piles of rock which diversify the shore to the southeast (south). To this boisterous scene the Columbia with its tributary waters, widening into bays as it approached the ocean, and studded on both sides with the Chinook and Clatsop villages, formed a charming contrast; while immediately beneath our feet were stretched rich prairies, enlivened by three beautiful streams, which conducted the eye to small lakes at the foot of the hills. We stopped to enjoy the romantic prospect from this place, which we distinguished by the name of Clark's Point of View."

The Indians were found friendly, and although



very close bargainers, and having ideas of value derived from the traders who visited the Columbia, were often quite liberal in their gifts, and hospitable whenever visited. Kobaiway, or Comowool, as incorrectly rendered in the journal, the head chief of the Clatsops, proved a reliable friend; and the following description of Clark's visit to a village of three houses on the beach is quite pleasing:—" Captain Clark was received with much hospitality. As soon as he entered clean mats were spread, and roots were placed before him on small neat platters made of rushes. After he had eaten the men of the other houses came and smoked with him. They all appeared much cleaner in their persons and diet than Indians generally are, and frequently washed their hands and faces, a ceremony by no means frequent elsewhere. . . . Towards evening it began to rain and blow very violently from the southwest, and Captain Clark therefore determined to remain over night. When they thought sufficient time had elapsed for his appetite to return, an old woman presented him, in a bowl made of a light colored horn, with a kind of sirup made from a species of berry common in the country, about the size of a cherry, and called by the Indians shelwell;\* of these berries a bread was also prepared, which being boiled with roots, formed a kind of soup, which was served in neat wooden trenchers; and these with some cockles, constituted his repast."

\* More correctly *sallal*.

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The Clatsop and Chinook Indians were more amply provided with food than any others met with; having many kinds of berries besides the sallal as mentioned above; and using native roots and tubers, such as bulbs of two or three kinds of lilies, the root of the lupine, which much resembles a sweet potato; that of the seaside anemone, a tuber attaining the girth of a man's arm, or even of the thigh, and several feet long, and almost as appetizing as the yam; the root of the thistle, which is more like a turnip; and also the dried roots brought from above, which were an article of commerce; the wappato, camas, and shanatawhe. These together with the abundant elk, deer, raccoons and rabbits, and innumerable shoals of fish, provided sustenance for a population much greater than that of the natives. To procure and properly cook these foods, however, involved much more labor, with the inadequate native implements, than among whites by cultivation. No evidence of want such as seen among the Shoshones, or of the exacting toils of the Nez Perces, was observed among the Clatsops. The explorers had no lack, either; though they could not depend upon a supply of just what they wanted from the Indians, who often asked great prices for food. Kobaiway, however, is mentioned a number of times as appearing with a timely supply, which he sold reasonably; and the Cathlamets occasionally brought camas in quantity. The elk were abundant, and if any want was felt by the Americans it was usually due to their

own improvidence, in either letting the animals spoil in their hides, as they do even if left a few hours; or with the stubbornness often seen in persons coming into new situations, insisting upon following the usage learned elsewhere. Thus having spent one winter in the intensely dry and cold country of the Missouri they now often left their meat exposed in the warm air of the Pacific, and then suffered because it was spoiled in a few days. The best hunter was Drewyer, the Canadian half-breed; who killed seven elk on one jaunt.

The Clatsop Indians proved entirely friendly, and much less obtrusive than those of the upper river tribes. Once at least the life of a white man was saved from intended murder and robbery by a Tillamook, by a woman giving warning. It was always maintained, also, by Kobaiway that he prevented an attack on the fort by the Klaskanies, a tribe ranging back to the Nehalem; and this is not improbable, as the outside Indians almost invariably followed the policy of beginning a disturbance in the territory of a tribe friendly to the whites, in order to bring upon such a tribe the punishment. Although Kuskaleh and several other Clatsops are mentioned favorably by Lewis and Clark, Kobaiway seems to have been the favorite, or at least deemed the most considerable and reliable. To him was given the fort after further use was not required, and he was intrusted with a document to be given to some shipmaster, giving a short sketch of the journey to the Pacific. The fol-



lowing favorable reference to this chief is found:—  
“ On the 24th (March) Comowool, who was by far the most friendly and decent savage we had seen in this neighborhood, came with a large party of Clatsops, bringing, among other articles, sturgeon, and a small fish which had just begun to make its appearance in the Columbia.”

Nevertheless, although so friendly that the principal concern of the captains became to prevent too greatly familiarity with them on the part of their men, lest lack of caution should tempt the Clatsops to treachery, these Indians were hardly favorites of the Americans. Unjustly disparaging remarks are often made of them. The men are described as rather short, ugly, and ill-made; with squat bodies and crooked legs. This would apply to only a portion—the slaves—as the legs of the Clatsops themselves were remarkably straight; nor were they deficient in height, being long-bodied. A part of this estimation must probably be referred to a certain prejudice among white men generally. Thus even to the present time we find “ the ideal Indian ” admired. He is the tall, lean, catlike species; never stooping to work, moody, and treacherous, dying rather than yielding to white men’s ways; and interesting chiefly because he is picturesque. The blanketed Indian dandy often seen loitering around the reservations excites much more interest generally than the thrifty Indian farmer, dressed in white garb; or the intellectual Indian student pondering his books. A chief

like Joseph, who defied all the armies of the United States and marched two thousand miles in a single season, seems much more "ideal" than the faithful Reuben, who performed a much greater exploit in bringing back across the plains the broken remnant of Joseph's band. Joseph is known everywhere; Reuben gained only the reward of a good deed performed.

The peaceable and industrious Clatsops did not excite so much notice, or gain even such favorable comment, as the moody Shoshones. However, we find constant references to qualities that are highly estimable. Thus as to their intelligence we see the following:—"The Clatsops and other nations at the mouth of the Columbia visited us with great freedom, and we endeavored to cultivate their friendship. . . . We found them inquisitive and loquacious, with understandings by no means deficient in acuteness; and though fond of feasts, and generally cheerful, never gay. Everything they observe excites their attention and inquiry. . . . To all our questions they answered with great intelligence, and the conversation rarely slackened, as there was a constant discussion of events, trade, politics, and so forth, in the small but active circle of the Killimucks, Clatsops, Cathlamahs, Wahkiacums, and Chinooks."

As to their temperance it is said:—"We did not see any liquor of an intoxicating kind used among these or any Indians west of the Rocky Mountains, the universal beverage being pure water"; though

excessive indulgence in tobacco smoke, and the universal gambling habit—the latter of strictly native origin—were noticed. As to business sense it is said:—"In traffic they are acute and intelligent, displaying a dexterity and finesse that would scarcely be expected." These people, too, they found disposed to peace; as the journal says, "The nations near the mouth of the Columbia enjoy great tranquillity, none of them being engaged in war." Even slaves taken in war were treated with kindness, being adopted in the Indian families and brought up as their own children. As to their treatment of women an equally favorable remark is found:—"Among the Clatsops and Chinooks the women have a rank and influence rarely found among Indians." The old or superannuated were not left to die, as among the hunting tribes of the plains. The men performed labor, almost equally with the women. "The men collect wood, attend to the fires, assist in cleaning the fish, and make houses, canoes, and wooden utensils; and whenever strangers are to be entertained, or a great feast prepared, the meats are served up by them." A remark that the Indians at the mouth of the river were better armed than those above, who owed exemption more to their timidity than their forbearance, would not seem to apply to the Clatsops, who, as seen elsewhere, inflicted great loss upon the Cascades, and kept the river route open.

The unfavorable features, and such as would make a deep impression and create dislike, may be traced



to the custom of flattening the head, which gives a certain grotesque or brutal appearance to the face; the readiness with which the virtue of the young women was bartered for trinkets; and the marks of disease, especially the loss of an eye. The Clatsops, although a comparatively wealthy people, had but about four years before the arrival of the explorers been visited with a disease, thought to be smallpox, which destroyed more than half the tribe. By this probably a certain demoralization, or loss of spirit, as the Indians grieve hopelessly for the dead, had supervened.

Tradition has remained among the Clatsop Indians of Lewis and Clark. Mr. Silas B. Smith, a grandson of Kobaiway on his mother's side, says:—"Concerning the arrival of the Lewis and Clark expedition at the mouth of the Columbia, and their sojourn at Fort Clatsop, more or less tradition was handed down by the Indians. At that time Kobaiway was the principal chief of the Clatsop Indians, within whose territory Fort Clatsop was established. Lewis and Clark erroneously gave the name of the chief Comowool—that arose no doubt from the indistinct manner in which the Indians pronounced the name; according to their pronunciation the 'b' in the name is but faintly sounded.

"On the eve of their homeward journey Lewis and Clark presented their stockade at Fort Clatsop to Kobaiway, and also left him a certificate announcing their arrival at the mouth of the Columbia River, to

be given to the captain of the first vessel that should arrive at the river. . . . The Indians here used to tell of the remarkable marksmanship of Captains Lewis and Clark with firearms, and of the surprises they used to give the savages by the wonderful accuracy of their shots. The Indians would notice some waterfowl sitting far beyond the range of bow and arrow, and would ask one or the other of the captains if he could hit it with a rifle ball; a trial would generally bring down the bird, sometimes just clipping off its head. Of course such feats would greatly impress the Indians with the remarkable qualities of the white men. An Indian youth, Twiltch by name, used to assist at Fort Clatsop in the hunting of elk and other game, and was thus taught the use of firearms, in the handling of which he became very proficient. I knew him in his later years, and in my earlier acquaintance with him he stood at the head of the hunters of his tribe. It was his boast that he was taught his art by Lewis and Clark. He seldom went out without securing an elk, and he would tell his people that he had the power to charm the game, and they were not able to get away from him; his usually good fortune induced a good many to believe him.

“The Indians inhabiting the upper part of Young’s River Valley and the Nehalem Valley were known as the Klatskanine people. It is claimed by Kobaiway that these Klatskanines were disposed to attack the camp at Fort Clatsop, and it was only

through his influence and constant dissuasion that they were restrained and no violence was committed. . . .

“ Lewis and Clark state that the Indians near Tillamook Head called the Columbia River ‘ Shocatilcum ’; that upon inquiry of them as to where they got their wappatoes, they gave this name, meaning the Columbia River. But they entirely misunderstood the Indians’ meaning. This is very easy of explanation. The wappatoes used by the Clatsops were obtained from Cathlamet Bay, above Tongue Point on the Columbia River. *Shocatilcum* was the chief of the Cathlamets; at that time his tribe was Shocatilcum’s people, and when the Clatsops were asked where they got their wappatoes, they pointed over toward the Columbia and said Shocatilcum, meaning only that they had got them from Shocatilcum’s people. . . . The Indians in this northwest country as far east as the Rocky Mountains, never name a river as a river. They name localities. . . . Some have even told me that they had found the Indian name of the Columbia; but it is a mistake.” No name for any river, the Columbia or any of its tributaries, says Mr. Smith, has been found among Indians; names that the whites understood as such were altogether of places along the streams. The Indians’ idea of water was no doubt about like ours of the air—a universal element, just the same in one place as another; the only particularity was the shore or coast that might embrace the water; but the



name attached to the place, not to the stream, or water.

The site of Fort Clatsop, at the salt cairn, near Seaside, where salt was obtained by evaporation of sea water by use of five kettles, was visited in August of 1899, by Mr. O. D. Wheeler, of *Western Wonderland*, and Mr. Smith's identification of both places, with some of the Indians, was accepted as entirely satisfactory and conclusive.

It is stated by Gass that 131 elk and 20 deer were killed by the party between December 1st and March 20th. This would represent over 2,000 pounds of meat to each man of the party, and as these were considered by the Clatsops the same as their range stock some idea of the liberality of the Indians from their point of view may be obtained. Probably a large amount of the meat was given to the Indians, and much of it was left to spoil in the woods after the hides were taken for leather and moccasins. Gass also mentions the valuable qualities of the spruce trees for split boards, calling this, however, "white cedar."

Thus the winter was spent; in a most friendly way with the natives, and with a great abundance of all that woods or water could afford. But the season proved very wet, being perhaps unusually so even for this humid coast climate; Gass mentions but six clear days, and twelve on which rain did not fall. Some of the men contracted rheumatism, and influenza became common. It was the intention to re-

main until the ships arrived in April, but on account of the sickness, and that the game was leaving for the hills, it was concluded to return up the river, and hunt in the valley between the coast and the Cascade Mountains. The winter fort was left March 23d, and the return journey proved scarcely less interesting than that westward; although it will be impossible to give even a detail to any extent.

The chief event was the discovery of the Willamette River, called by them Multnomah; taking the word from the Indian name Emulthnomah, a point on the west side of the river a little above Sauvie's Island; the name *Walamt*, for which the river is now called, was a point on the west side near the falls. On the passage down the Columbia the mouth of the Willamette was hidden by the islands; on the passage up the party was impressed that the great valley, which they had more leisure now to observe, was too large to be drained by only the comparatively little Quicksand, or Sandy; and learning of some Indians that there was another stream, returned, and made a most interesting examination. It is thus recorded in their narrative, and is an exceedingly valuable fragment from the journal, as it not only gives a delightful description of the first sight by white men of the beautiful river of western Oregon, which has since become the seat of the metropolis of the Pacific Northwest, but illustrates also the kindly and humorous methods employed by Captain Clark in dealing with the natives, and how by arousing

both their curiosity, or superstitions, and their sense of duty, he carried any point he chose without recourse to violence. While camping on the north side of the Columbia, just opposite the upper mouth of the Sandy, and hunting, there came, about eight o'clock in the morning, into their camp two young Indians, who said that they were of a tribe called Cushooks (Clackamas?), who lived at the falls of a large river that came into the Columbia from the south; "and they drew a map of the country with a coal, on a mat." This was an accomplishment quite generally found among the Indians, that of map-drawing. Captain Clark at once was interested, and by offering one of the young men a burning glass secured him as a guide to accompany him up the river, and with seven of the men set out at once. This was about eleven o'clock in the morning, and taking a course down the south side of the Columbia, he found at three in the afternoon a village of twenty-four rush houses; but only one was occupied. This he entered, and found some of the *Neerchokioo* tribe. On entering one of the apartments he offered several tempting articles in exchange for wappatoes, of which he wished to obtain a supply. "But," proceeds the journal, "the Indians appeared sullen and ill-humored and refused to give him anything." He then devised the following little harmless scheme. "Sitting down by the fire opposite to the men, he drew a portfire match from his pocket, and threw a small piece of it into the flames; at the same time



he took out his pocket compass, and by means of a magnet which happened to be in his inkhorn, made the needle turn around very briskly. The match immediately took fire and burned violently, on which the Indians, terrified at the strange exhibition, brought a quantity of wappato and laid it at his feet, begging him to put out the bad fire; while an old woman continued to speak with great vehemence, as if praying and imploring protection. After receiving the roots Captain Clark put up the compass, and as the match went out of itself tranquillity was restored, though the women and children still sought refuge in their beds and behind the men." He paid for what he took, and smoked with them, showing the most hearty good will; though the Indians still regarded him with some dread as a great maker of medicine.

Some miles below this village he found the entrance to the Willamette; the island which they had noted as seen from the north side proving to be three smaller islands, between which the broad and deep stream from the southeast broke over into the greater Columbia. It was now late in the afternoon, and the weather was evidently fine and clear, as the five snow-capped mountains were all visible. "From its entrance Mount Ranier bears nearly north; Mount St. Helens north; with a very high humped mountain a little to the east of it, which seems to lie in the same chain with the conic-pointed mountain before mentioned [Mount Adams]. Mount Hood

bore due east [considerably south of east], and Captain Clark now discovered to the southeast a mountain which he had not yet seen, to which he gave the name of Mount Jefferson. Like Mount St. Helens, its figure is a regular one, covered with snow, and it is probably of equal height with that mountain. . . .

“ The current of this river [the Multnomah] is as gentle as that of the Columbia [the lower course]; its surface is smooth and even, and it appears to possess water enough for the largest ship, since, on sounding with a line of five fathoms, he could find no bottom at least one-third of the way across.” Ten miles [less] up from the mouth he reached a large wooden house on the east side, no doubt almost precisely the site of the suburban point St. Johns; and here, twilight falling, he intended to sleep. But finding the old building, which was thirty by forty feet, and built of wide boards, infested with fleas, preferred remaining outside. He noticed with admiration for the honesty of the natives that the absent inhabitants had left their valuables, such as canoes, mats, bladders, train oil, baskets, bowls, and trenchers, lying about the house at the mercy of every visitor; and added drily: “ A proof, indeed, of their respect for the property of each other, though we had very conclusive evidence that the property of white men was not deemed equally sacred.”

The next day, April 3d, a point somewhat below the

site of the city of Portland was reached.\* It is described as in its first loneliness, but still impressive beauty. "Early the next morning Captain Clark proceeded up the river, which during the night had fallen about five inches [owing to the tide]. At the distance of two miles he came to the center of a bend under the highlands on the right side, from which its course, as far as could be discerned, was to the east of southeast [south of southeast]. At this place

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\* Captain Clark's exploration of the Willamette extended, according to his estimate, a distance of five miles above the mouth of Willamette Slough—three miles to his camp on the east side of the river and two miles the following morning. This would bring him, as Doctor Coues states, about Waud's Bluff and Swan Island. The distances traveled up stream by the explorers are usually very much overestimated. Doctor Coues says of the journal for March 29th: "Distances seem overestimated to-day." This distance was nineteen miles. The estimate for the following day was twenty-three miles, extending from the vicinity of Fales' landing to the site of Vancouver. The actual distance does not exceed fifteen miles. From this camp to the next one, opposite the mouth of the Sandy River, a distance of about fifteen miles, the estimate is twenty-five miles. The distance from the mouth of the Willamette River to the mouth of the slough is estimated at seven miles. The actual distance does not exceed three miles, and could not at the time have been appreciably greater. From this habit of overestimating distances traveled up stream, it is safe to assume that the highest point reached was much less than five miles above the mouth of Willamette Slough. The large wooden house, in the neighborhood of which the party slept, and which, if three miles above the slough, as estimated, must have been at about the site of St. Johns, was the temporary residence of Indians living near the falls, who came there to gather wappato. It is not likely that such a residence was at or near the site of St. Johns. It was probably some distance below, in proximity to the Wappato Lakes in that vicinity. Indian villages and camps were usually on the banks of bayous and ponds, convenient for fishing or gathering mussels or wappatoes. Evidences of such villages may still be seen on the low grounds of the Columbia, and it



the Multnomah is five hundred yards wide, and for half that distance across a cord of five fathoms would not reach the bottom. It appears to be washing away its banks, and has more sand bars and willow points than the Columbia. Its regular, gentle current, the depth, smoothness and uniformity with which it rolls its vast body of water, proves that its supplies are at once distant and steady; nor, judging from its appearance and course, is it rash to believe that the Multnomah and its tributary streams water the vast

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is probable that epidemics of fever and ague, to which the Indians were subject, were aggravated, if not caused, by these malarial residences.

The highest point reached by Captain Clark was where "he came to the center of a bend under the high land on the right side from which its (the river's) course, as could be discerned, was to the E. S. E." This point was probably a short distance above Linnton, near the site of the old Springville wharf—much in evidence thirty years ago—a little below St. Johns, on the opposite side of the river. Below this point the river curves crescent-shaped to its mouth. Above, to the west of Swan Island, which appears to be a continuation of the east main shore line, the river is "discerned" in a south-east course, practically straight to the railroad bridge in the lower part of the City of Portland, a distance of about seven miles. This course conforms closely to the last view of the Willamette River recorded in the journal, and there is no other that approximates it. At this point, and at no other, at least within a distance that Captain Clark could have reached in time to have returned to the house of the Neerchokioo at about eleven o'clock, the river curves in close to the high lands on the right side. The fact standing alone that Swan Island and Mock's bottom, the latter covered with water at that stage of the river, and constituting a notable feature in the landscape, are not mentioned in that faithful journal, which recorded islands and sand bars and "willow points," shows that these were not discovered, as they certainly would have been if the reconnaissance had extended far enough to have permitted it.—Judge C. B. Bellingren.

extent of country between the western mountains and those of the sea coast, as far, perhaps, as the Gulf of California."

This was, to be sure, a great overestimate; yet the Willamette in the spring time compares favorably in volume and looks with streams like the Colorado or Missouri. Its volume, however, is nearer one-twentieth that of the Columbia than one-fourth. From this point the captain returned, and by eleven o'clock again reached the house of the Neerchokioos, where he had performed his tricks with slow fuses and his magnetic needle, and remarks naively that "they were all so much alarmed at his presence, notwithstanding his visit yesterday, that he remained a very few minutes only."

The return trip of the Lewis and Clark expedition through the valley of the Columbia and over the Bitter Root Mountains was greatly aided by the Nez Perces, who proved the most faithful and abiding of friends, and from that first friendship never, as a tribe, have been swerved. In the Blackfoot country the only serious trouble with any Indians ever occurred. Here Lewis and his three men—having separated from the main party—were robbed by the Blackfeet, and in order to recover their animals attacked and killed two of the eight thieves. They then made their flight, marching or rather running 120 miles in 24 hours, meeting at length the main party. From this first encounter with whites is said to date the implacable hostility of the Blackfeet, which lasted

over half a century. Other instances are on record, where the hostility of Indians was excited by a false step, that made the whole bias of the tribe that of enemies, and cost the whites many lives, and the tribe's final extinction. The implacable hate of the southern Oregon Indians is said to have dated from the killing of one of their tribe by the first party of whites coming from California.

On the other hand the uniform policy of Lewis and Clark, maintained at all times except in this one instance, of conciliation and friendship, left such a broad mark as to make the leading and central Indian tribes the friends of the Americans. The Indian history, and the history of Oregon, would have been far different, if the Nez Perces, Mandans, Sioux, Shoshones, Walla Wallas, Wascos, Chinooks, Tillamooks, and Clatsops, had gained the disposition from the first of the Blackfeet and the Rogue Rivers. The white man's superiority, both in knowledge and arts, and weapons, was made apparent to these great central tribes; but as no effort to use that superiority in a manner disadvantageous or hurtful to the Indians was shown, it gave no menace, but rather the assurance of great advantage. The expedition was planned by Jefferson in the light of the American idea, which had been successfully established by the Revolution: Not, certainly, that the wandering savages of North America were the equals of the civilized and instructed whites; nor that they were to be fictitiously regarded so; but that, as among the



whites themselves, the relations between the two races were to be established along the points of natural equality: That is, the rights of the red men to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, including the opportunity of industry and to learn the superior arts, were to be made the points of intercourse. With the utmost fidelity, and with all but perfect success, the two American captains carried through the detail of his plan, leaving lasting respect and friendship among the red men all the way from the mouth of the Missouri to the mouth of the Columbia. The Mandans, Aricaras, Flatheads, Nez Perces, and Chinooks, with the Clatsops and Tillamooks, always cherished and preserved that friendship; the Sioux, Snakes, and Walla Wallas, with the Palouses, and Klikitats, were friends until pressed severely by white settlements; or unless embroiled in the conflicts of white contestants. Jefferson's assumption that even savages would be able to understand, and willing to respond to a just and liberal treatment, along the line of the newly promulgated doctrines of human rights, was thus abundantly justified.

Lewis did not live to reach Washington. After arriving at St. Louis he was occupied closely in Government service, being made governor of Louisiana. After a few years he was obliged to visit the national capital, and in company with a single servant proceeded by the southern route. At a lonely country tavern he was found, as reported by the keepers of the place, dead in his room. The woman

in charge said that he was heard during the night stirring about, and although alone, either reading or talking aloud, and "arguing like a lawyer." Until quite recently the supposition has been that in a moment of melancholy, induced perhaps by some trouble in his accounts with the Government, he committed suicide. The other theory, that he was killed by his guide or perhaps by the tavern keeper, for his money, is gaining credit. Clark was made a brigadier-general of the Louisiana militia, and Indian agent for the territory; and in 1813 governor of Missouri. He died in 1838, at the age of sixty-nine.

As a final estimate of this expedition, and its results, it may be said that it represented the action of the American people in their social and organic capacity. It had no incentive of individual gain, but was enthusiastically supported by the people without exception, as a way of satisfying public curiosity and making a line that individuals might follow. It was one of those theoretical projects, based upon general interest and ideal conclusions, by which organized society has often anticipated individual wants. It was so well calculated, however, and so well executed, that all the ideal advantages were at once translated from terms of theory to terms of practical operation. It would never have been undertaken, and could never have been carried out, if the Americans had not had both the great ideal thinker, and the trained corps of officers. It was the

natural outcome of American institutions, which most of all governmental organizations provide a fund of public information and sentiment, and select with greatest discrimination the agents for effectuating the demands of the opinion thus created.





## CHAPTER VIII

### MINOR EXPEDITIONS





**A**FTER having seen with gratification the unbroken success of the Americans, first in entering the river which had baffled representatives of every other nation, and had defied all the Old World kings; and then in establishing a trade on the Pacific Coast which almost all the other nations coveted, but had not been able to control; and finally the magnificent project of Jefferson on the part of the American Government, and its successful execution by a detachment of but three squads of soldiers; we must now prepare ourselves to witness a long series of failures by Americans. Some of these had no result, except to familiarize Americans with the necessities and conditions in occupying Oregon. Others, although failures from the point intended, still left important results. But though for forty years the history of Americans is but that of reverses, in no series of events does the persistence of its nature, or the impossibility of giving up an idea once firmly implanted in it, show itself more unmistakably. There were big failures and little failures; but no sooner was one done with before a new effort was projected. The faith of some one in the hundred-handed and myriad-eyed American society was always found sufficient to project enterprises upon the coast or into the territory of Oregon. It was the common man—the heroic many—that was found at last as the surviving type, and became the Oregonian.

The policy of Jefferson in sending Lewis and Clark on a mission to the Indians of the Missouri was to promote the fur trade. He desired to bring this to the New York emporium rather than let it drift to the Canadians and to Montreal. The first to take advantage of the opening made by the explorers was a party under Ezekiel Williams. It was in part to carry out the promise of the Government to the Mandan chief, Big White, who had accepted the invitation to go to Washington only on the pledge that he should be conducted home again in safety, that Williams with his twenty men from Missouri, left St. Louis April 25, 1807, and proceeded to the upper waters of the great river. To the Mandans the return of their chief according to promise was a most remarkable demonstration of the honesty of the white man. But Williams's party going still higher, to the Yellowstone, and attempting to trap in the Blackfoot country, met with different treatment. A Blackfoot was accidentally caught in a trap; besides the punishment administered by Lewis was remembered. At an unexpected moment the trappers were assailed by one hundred of the revengeful savages; five were killed, the Blackfeet losing but two. Williams then led his band into the Crow country; but on the headwaters of the Platte was again attacked, losing five more of his men. Proceeding still southward to the Arkansas a still greater loss awaited him, only himself and two others escaping with their lives. Williams himself reached the Missouri;

the two others went to New Mexico, remaining fifteen years.

The next year, 1808, the Missouri Fur Company was formed, pioneer of the numerous companies and free trappers that gradually scattered bands of the most hardy and reckless men that ever lived, over the Rocky Mountain fastnesses. Manuel Lisa, an old-time trader, and William Clark, with four merchants of St. Louis, of French names, formed this company, with a capital of forty thousand dollars, and outfitted a party under Alexander Henry\* for

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\* Alexander Henry was a man of no common abilities. He was by no means a mere adventurer, but possessed of great intellectual curiosity, and had a talent for observation. In all of his wanderings he faithfully kept a journal, and took such care of the large accumulation that even condensed it required two volumes, aggregating nearly 1,000 pages, to contain it. This journal is of such interest that Mrs. Victor, speaking of the work of Dr. Eliot Coues, says:—"Of all the work done by Dr. Coues none has interested me more than his abridgment of and notes upon the journal of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, two of the leaders of the Northwest Fur Company almost a century ago, extending over a period of fourteen years and covering the ground from Lake Superior to the mouth of the Columbia, whose ruthless waters at the last swallowed up Henry, May 22, 1814. When Dr. Coues found it the paper was much worn, and the writing in places illegible. . . . Not only is the journal itself of great interest, but the notes and explanations attached to almost every page are wonderfully complete. The enormous bulk of Henry's matter is reduced by the editor, together with his notes, to 216 pages, in two volumes, without the sacrifice of facts, giving us a clear account of the country's history not obtainable in any, or all other, writers."

The fact that a man of Coues' understanding should select the work of Henry as the text upon which to detail the history of the West for that period, shows the value of the observations of this agent of the Missouri Fur Company; who, however, shortly after giving up his post on the Snake, joined the Canadians.



the upper Missouri and Yellowstone. He was dislodged by the Blackfeet, who retained their traditional hostility; but rather than return he decided to cross the Rocky Mountains and build a fort among the enemies of the Blackfeet, on the Snake. On the fork of that river since known by his name, he selected a spot, and in 1809 erected his establishment. This is memorable as the first house built for permanent occupancy west of the Rocky Mountains by Americans. His plans, however, did not succeed, and the next year his fort was abandoned.

About the same time some of the Boston merchants decided to renew the efforts for trade and settlement on the Northwest Coast. These were the Winship Brothers, merchants of high standing already trading with ships between North America and China. How much, if anything, of their plan, was owed to the Lewis and Clark expedition does not appear. It can scarcely be doubted that men like the Winships had heard of the success and some of the details of the journey to the mouth of the Columbia. But the plan laid out seems rather but the continuation of the plans of Kendrick and Ingraham, and Gray. By this time—1808—trading on the Northwest Coast for furs had been carried on successfully for many years; the vessels, however, simply entering harbor after harbor, and when a load was obtained, passing on.

The greater advantage of a permanent settlement, where supplies of various kinds could be produced,

and a comfortable stopping place be established, grew upon the mind of Abiel Winship, who conducted the affairs of the firm in Boston. One of the brothers, Jonathan, was master of the vessel "O'Cain," which visited the California Coast, and in the Pacific Islands gathered sandal wood for the China market. It was decided to form a larger company, send a ship to the Columbia, and proceeding some distance up the river find a suitable spot for cultivation, and there establish a settlement. The details of the plan were carefully arranged. A strong block house should be built, with two stories, and mounting several guns. The upper story was to be perfectly secure; no admittance being provided except by a ladder and a trap door; the ladder being drawn up and the door fastened down when special safety was required. A tract of ground was to be cleared and planted, trade with the Indians promoted, and the desultory methods of the Americans systematized. No plan could have been more practical; and it was in point of fact precisely the plan to which all later expeditions worked. The Winships, like Ledyard, must have the credit of laying out lines of operation which ever after controlled practical men on this coast.

The ship "Albatross," an old and slow, but still staunch sailer, was fitted out, and placed under the command of Nathan Winship. William Smith, a very practical man, and whose services will be noticed later, was first mate. The captain's assistant,

William A. Gale, was detailed to keep the journal of the events, and to this is owed the preservation of the record of the effort and the reason of its failure. Sailing in July, 1809, the vessel reached Hawaii the next April, and there loading goats and other live stock arrived off the Columbia May 26th. Careful seamanship is manifest and the bar is crossed in safety. Indeed during the fifteen years of constant use by Americans the entrance of the Columbia had become very familiar to their pilots, and there is no record during that time of a single disaster. The dismal reports of Vancouver and Lieutenant Broughton were thus early shown to be exaggerations.

The "Albatross," having entered the river, went immediately up the river, although not without some difficulty. Not having learned the main channel the crooked and narrow courses of the north side were followed, but by the first of June a distance of about forty-five miles had been covered. Here they found that the lordly river, which had opened to them almost numberless channels, and winding streams between mazy islands, made a great bend, and contracted into one very deep and comparatively narrow channel; having on the north a tier of precipices of several hundred feet high; but on the south a lowland several miles broad, and twice as long, stretching away up the river. These lowlands were covered with luxuriant grasses, and a few shrubs; while on a somewhat higher ridge next the river was a grove of fine oak trees. No place seemed



more suitable for the purposes of a settlement, and on the fourth of the leafy month the ship was brought to the site chosen, and preparations were made for erecting the house. The next day, all being serene, work was begun early, the force being mostly sent ashore to clear a spot for the house and also for a garden; and seeds were sown as fast as a place was made for them. On the sixth the foundations for the house were laid, heavy logs of oak being used.

On the night of the next day, however, the weather turned cloudy, and heavy rain fell. In the morning it was found that the river was rising rapidly; this being attributed, apparently, to the rain. It was, however, as would now be instantly recognized, the annual rise of the river, and it was the previous warm weather that had hastened it. This beautiful meadow was in fact a great strip of the Columbia River's flood land. More careful inspection of the shore, with the water marks, would have suggested this to the settlers; but as in many enterprises the best laid plans go wrong from oversight of perfectly apparent difficulties; so it appears that Winship's attention was not directed to an examination of the habits of the river. The water soon stood from eighteen inches to two feet deep over the spot cleared and leveled for the house, and flooded to an equal depth the garden spot, drowning the freshly planted seeds. The house had already been laid up about ten feet high with the heavy timbers; but it was now evident that another spot must be selected and the

logs removed. First mate Smith now made an examination and found considerably higher ground a little distance down the river; though without doubt this would also have been overflowed, perhaps that season, as the height of the flood is seldom reached before July; and if not that season, it might have been at any other. But without taking what might happen into consideration it was decided to move to the new site; the logs were thrown down, and floated thither, and a fresh clearing was begun.

Trouble from the river—or rather from their hasty selection of a site without stopping to learn the needs of the river—had hardly well begun, before trouble from a new and much more dangerous quarter began to appear. The Indians had visited the ship and clearing almost every day, but not in large numbers, and had seemed entirely harmless. But on the tenth, as the journal says, they began to assemble in larger force, and their actions caused serious apprehension. “This afternoon several canoes arrived from Chinook and Chehales, containing many natives, all armed with bows and arrows, or muskets.” The exploration of their appearance at this time and place was far from reassuring. The journal continues: “They informed us that the Cula-worth tribe, who had a village near to where we were building the house, had killed one of their chiefs about ten months previously, and they had now come up for the purpose of punishing them, and would give battle on the morrow.” This was justly re-

garded by Winship as a most extraordinary statement, and aroused the suspicion that it was not to punish any tribe of Indians, but perhaps to attack the settlement, that this war party had come up the Columbia.

These suspicions were fully confirmed the next day. The ship's company were astir at daylight and at four in the morning were sent ashore and began their work. The Indians were also seen moving about, but showed no signs of fighting each other. On the contrary they were seen straggling off in small parties or groups, and even single ones of the Chinooks were noticed walking alone with the tribe said to be hostile to them. As a precaution the ship was drifted down close to the place where the men were working, and the guns were loaded afresh and trained to cover the ground. As the day advanced the Indians gathered in larger force, and began shouting and whooping and occasionally firing their pieces; but not fighting one another. Signs of hostility to the whites constantly increased, and as a sort of culmination an Indian appeared in front of the ship, and held up a musket, which he leveled at Captain Winship as he sat on the taffrail; but did not fire.

The next day work was suspended and some sort of a conference was held with the natives. It is not so stated, but the inference would seem to be that some of the Chinooks were asked aboard ship, and were given an opportunity to explain their behavior.



It was discovered, as might have been foreseen at the beginning, that it was against the interests of the Chinooks that the settlement should be made up the river. The journal states:—"One thing is certain; the Chinooks are strongly against our coming up here; wishing, as they say, the house should be built among themselves, and the lower tribes; as they are in the habit of purchasing skins from the upper tribes and reselling these to the ships that occasionally arrive at the mouth of the Columbia. They are afraid, and certainly with reason, that the settlement being established so far up, will tend to injure their own trade, and they are no doubt determined to prevent it if possible." While it was perfectly apparent that force might be used, it was equally clear that this would only end in defeat of their plan, even more effectually than by immediately abandoning the project. No considerable number of men could be left at the post, and if the Indians were made hostile the few whites that were left after the ship was gone could, and probably would, be cooped up in their house and not allowed to work their garden, or to carry on trade. After consultation it was concluded to abandon the post at once; and this decision was given to the Chinooks, who seemed entirely satisfied.

On the twelfth, scarcely two weeks having passed since their arrival, the "Albatross" weighed anchor, and in the strong freshet quickly returned to the mouth of the Columbia. This reversal of their

calculations at the demands of the savages was keenly felt. The journal concludes:—"It is cutting to be obliged to knuckle to those whom you have not the least fear of, but whom, from motives of prudence, you are obliged to treat with forbearance. What can be more disagreeable than to sit at table with a number of these rascally chiefs, who, while they supply their greedy mouths from your food with one hand, their bloods boil within them to cut your throat with the other, without the least provocation." This, although not altogether grammatical, is quite clear, and shows that Winship and his men left the Columbia with no very pleasant feelings toward the natives. The journal adds that it was intended, if opportunity offered, to punish the Chinooks well for their insolence. The "Albatross," however, sailed out of the Columbia, and off to California and the Hawaiians, not to return until several years after, and then under charter of Wilson P. Hunt, and in command of First Mate Smith. The desire for punishing the rascally Chinooks was not lasting; and probably was mentioned as a solace to the sense of humiliation.

The effort of the Winships seems thus to have ended rather tamely. The chief lack of judgment was in not giving the necessary consideration to the disposition of the natives with whom they had to deal. The Chinooks were traders, and had enjoyed for many years the advantage of middlemen between the whites and other tribes. Without their good

will it was useless to attempt either trade or settlement on the Columbia. This part of the problem had not been considered, and this was the very first thing that they were obliged to meet on the Columbia. Winship is to be credited with good sense for seeing quickly that with so small a party, and with but one ship, and no government backing, it was useless to attempt an occupancy of permanent posts on the Columbia.\* Astor, immediately following, attempted to project his scheme with sufficient force; but found that he too had underestimated the requirements. It was not until the far greater and highly organized British Company arrived that it was found practicable to attempt the occupation commercially of the valley of the Columbia; but this is anticipating.

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\* Winship is said to have been planning a second expedition to the Columbia; but learning of the Astor expedition already under organization, with much larger equipment, gave it up finally.



## CHAPTER IX

### NEW YORK TAKES PART



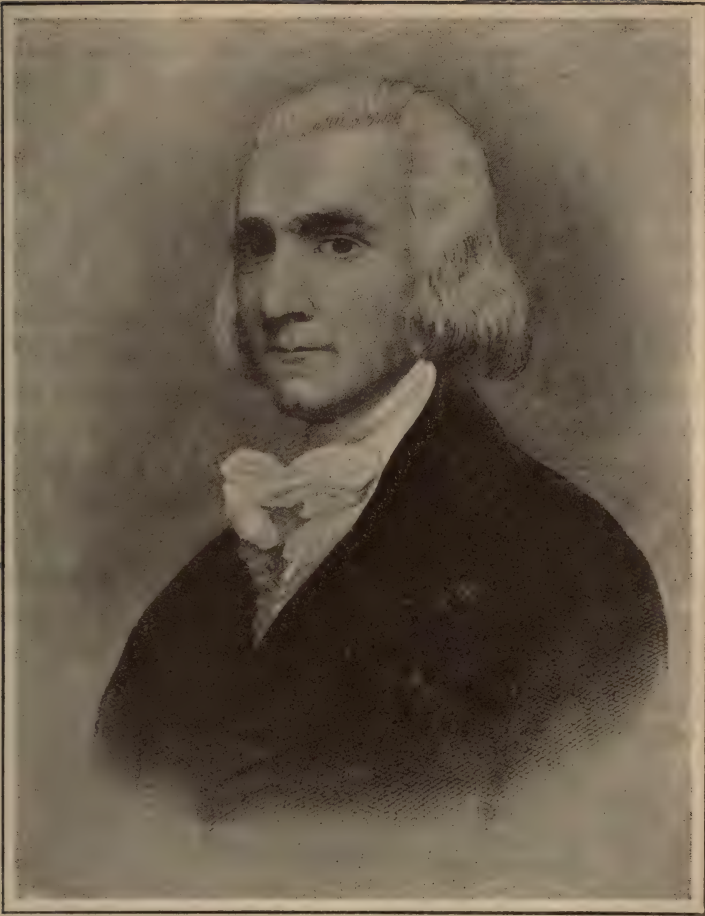
**I**N the development of Oregon many of the first minds of America have been directly interested. We have seen that Ledyard, the eminent traveler; Robert Gray, the first American sailor of his day, who carried the American flag first around the world; and Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and the maker of the geographical greatness of the United States, all had an interest in Oregon. With the rapid growth of the United States in commercial enterprise, another, and the leading mind in his field, became interested also. This was John Jacob Astor, the first merchant prince.

Astor was a native of Germany. He was born in the little town of Waldorf. He inherited neither wealth nor rank, but had from the first a very broad idea of life and its opportunities, and soon developed the purpose to acquire fortune and power. While still very young he went to London, and began trading. Shortly after the Revolutionary War he concluded that America rather than England offered the greatest scope to his ambitions; for it was not simply the acquisition of wealth but a large and plastic environment, where he might more easily lay foundations for future growth, that he desired. In this he showed the characteristic mark of the American merchant prince to whom wealth is not either for the greater satisfaction of personal enjoyments, or for securing a place among the titled, but as a head of power by means



of which world-wide projects may be carried through.

He came to America poor in everything but his large ideas, and began to trade out his little stock of small goods brought with him. In looking about for something in which to reinvest his meager profits he was directed by a casual friend, who was a furrier, to buy pelts. His venture proved successful, and he was induced thereby to make a more thorough study of the fur business. His courage rose, and about this time he predicted that he would himself one day, though at that time but an unknown German trader, build finer structures than were then rising to astonish the inhabitants of Gotham. Pursuing his business of buying furs, which he got mostly in Canada and was obliged to send from Montreal to London, he quickly discovered the state and condition of the great and still profitable and growing trade in peltries. He decided that not Canada but the United States was the natural center of this trade, and that it might be diverted to New York. For two reasons this appeared; the first was largely a convention, and might be changed by law, as was actually done; which was that Canada was not allowed to trade to any country but Great Britain. This handicapped Canada as the center of a world-wide trade. From America trade to all parts of the world could be undertaken. It was a good policy, then, to concentrate the entire fur trade, as far as possible, within the United States. The other reason was from pure-



JOHN JACOB ASTOR





ly natural, or geographical considerations. Within the borders of the United States were included a large portion of the fur bearing regions; and especially if the Northwest coast could be included in this.

This was indeed the deciding factor. All the Columbia River Valley was fur-bearing. The coast of British Columbia, or New Caledonia, was not yet under the control of any nation, and like Oregon, was open to the enterprise of Americans. Here also the British were severely handicapped, as the China trade was still a monopoly of the East India Company, and the Canadians could not trade to China. The Russians, it is true, occupied the long and rich Alaskan coast, as now denominated; but it would not be difficult to cultivate relations with them which would enable Americans to trade there also. Indeed they were doing so already, but clandestinely and to the annoyance of the Russians. In place of this illicit trade,\* which was the only bone of contention between the United States and the friendly Russian,

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\* In the spring of 1808 the Russian government opened a correspondence with the government of the United States in relation to what Russia was pleased to term the illicit traffic of American traders with the natives inhabiting Russian territories. It appeared in the course of the correspondence that Russia claimed the coast at this time as far south as the Columbia River. The right to make settlements, or at least to establish trading posts, it seems she did not confine to the southern limit, for in 1816 a Russian post was established as far south as latitude 38 degrees in California. In this later and more aggressive policy of extending her claims southward Russia is thought to have been influenced by the publication in Paris in 1808 of Humboldt's "Political Essay on

a regular trade under proper and satisfactory restraints should be established. Supplies could be sent to the Russian posts by the outgoing ships, and the equivalent in furs be returned. A further dream rose before Astor's mind; which was that he could obtain an island in the Pacific, perhaps in the Hawaiian group, which would become the emporium of a great mid-ocean traffic, completing his system of trade on the Northwest Coast. New York, moreover, had every advantage over Montreal to reach this Pacific trade; and even over Boston, which had attempted to control it. The Canadians were shut up to transference of their furs in packs from the Rocky Mountains to Montreal, occupying three years; and if they should attempt to add the trade of the Columbia Valley it would require four; or if they attempted to trade by sea it must be at all the disadvantage of using the St. Lawrence, or even London, as their base.

But besides having the shorter ocean route to the Pacific Northwest, and the advantage of the Chinese and the Russian trade, which the Canadians could not have, he would also have the shorter and easier land

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New Spain," in which such a destiny for Russia had been hinted at. However this may have been it is certain that the accounts of Humboldt's travels were eagerly read by the Russian emperor, and an increased boldness and aggressiveness are observable in Russian policy after the publication of this work.—Joseph R. Wilson, "The Oregon Question."

The idea that Russia would control the Pacific Coast and ocean was mentioned by Ross Cox, who said that he thought Russia would some time possess the Sandwich Islands.

route. The United States commanded the Missouri route to the Columbia. This Astor would also employ. It was his plan to unite under one management the methods hitherto employed separately by Americans. Following the steps of the Missouri Fur Company, he would establish a series of posts from St. Louis to the Columbia, keeping open a line of communication and supplies across the continent, while he sent his heavier freight by water and with his ships carried the furs to China, and from that market brought back to New York the goods of the Orient. He believed that it was possible thus to limit the British to their few streams around Hudson's Bay, while the greater part of the furs of the continent would seek either the Missouri River, or the Columbia, or the Northwest Coast, and fall into his hands.

The essential feature of this plan was to establish on the Northwest Coast an emporium, which would become the center of the trade and would eventually rise to an importance on the Pacific Coast like that enjoyed by New York on the Atlantic. The point to be selected must be at the mouth of the Columbia River, the end of the route across the continent. The establishment of an emporium here would lead to the settlement of the country, the dispersion of Americans over the Pacific Coast, and the ultimate rise of a State, as one of those on the Atlantic side. This would be the ultimate result, and although the fur trade in the immediate vicinity might suffer, greater



results would spring from occupation of the country by a civilized people. With this view of the case Jefferson, to whom Astor confided his plans, felt the keenest sympathy, writing:—"I considered as a great public acquisition the commencement of a settlement on that point of the western coast of North America, and looked forward with gratification to the time when its descendants should have spread themselves through the whole length of that coast, covering it with free and independent Americans, unconnected with us except by the ties of blood and interest and enjoying like us the rights of self-government."

Astor believed that this whole trade might be organized under one mind and carried on under one management; and he had the daring to attempt this himself.

The breadth and magnificence of his plan, covering so large a part of the surface, or the routes, of the earth in its scope, and requiring so many connected interests, might be almost set aside as a dream of an enthusiast rather than of a sober man of business; and the details of its operations, which were but series of disasters, could now be hardly followed with interest for the matter itself; for it was but a collapse, drawn out through two long years; except that from the results of the plans of this merchant prince followed common men who lent services far more valuable than Astor's. Of him all that remains is the name on the coast. The common men,

who are all but nameless, but who cast in their lot with Oregon and gave it their life, at the critical time, almost determined the political destiny of our State. We shall therefore pursue the details of the brilliant plan to its final catastrophe; but look for the residuum of American manhood left from the movement upon the soil of Oregon.

In the formation of his company—of which Astor himself was the only real proprietor, although he added nominal partners—Astor followed very singular lines. The model that he selected was that of the British monopolies, particularly of the Canadian fur companies. While his general plan was large and bold, and American in its outlook, he showed no originality in arranging the details; but rather almost a servile imitation of European models. Astor himself was to be the actual head, holding fifty of the one hundred shares of stock, and able at any time to introduce other persons as partners, but none to hold more than three shares. He was to furnish goods, vessels, arms, and ammunition, but not to advance more than the value of \$400,000. He also agreed to bear all losses. His so-called partners had really no capital in the concern, and but little stock, and as Mr. Astor's proxy might be given to whom he would, he was the real authority. His plan was monopolistic to the extreme.

In carrying out this plan, formed after the pattern of European companies, which in turn were founded upon monarchical conceptions, Astor, although an

American by adoption, and seeing the vast advantage of conducting his business under the liberal government of a republic, was forced to find his subordinates chiefly outside of the United States. It was to Canada and those already trained in European manners that he must look for his partners and employees. He found what he deemed suitable men among the clerks or servants of the Northwest Fur Company. Several he associated with himself as partners; under the partners he secured twelve clerks, to whom the insignificant sum of one hundred dollars per year, and forty dollars' worth of clothing, was to be paid at the end of five years; although this might be withheld for bad conduct. The expectation, however, was that at the end of five years they might, if found faithful and serviceable, become partners. Besides the partners, who were lords of the first degree, and the clerks who were gentleman, were a number of mechanics; and as the common order below the mechanics were thirteen voyageurs. As to nationality the partners were mostly Highland Scotch; the clerks were Scotch or French Canadians; the voyageurs were French Canadians, probably with considerable native Indian admixture, though some had never been upon the water. This, so far as character of organization and personnel was concerned, was no other than an importation of a section of the Northwest Company. Astor was undoubtedly entirely aware of this, and formed his plans and partnerships purposely along these lines,



his reason being not only that he did not know of any other way of organizing a fur company, but with the direct intention of gradually absorbing the Canadian concern. Indeed he made the proposition at the outset that the two unite; but the offer was rejected, as the Northwesters even then had the intention of forcing a union with the Hudson's Bay Company; and the only result of this overture was that a company was despatched by land under David Thompson to occupy the mouth of the Columbia before Astor's party could arrive.

Having organized his company on the Canadian plan, Astor now determined to place it under a very strict American supervision. The sea party should be under an officer of the American navy. To this extent the American Government would recognize the undertaking, granting leave of absence to a lieutenant who had distinguished himself in the affair with the Barbary pirates. Some such supervision seemed the more necessary, as the United States was then verging toward war with Great Britain. The land party was also to be under the leadership of an American. Astor also took the precaution to require his partners and employees to take the oath of allegiance to the United States; which they agreed to do, but instead repaired to the British minister then in New York, and laid before him the whole scheme, which was confidential to Astor, and asked his advice whether British subjects could engage in such an enterprise. This is stated with the greatest frank-

ness by the Canadians, and with the evident feeling that they were acting very much on the square; but showing how little they understood their obligations as members of Astor's company.

As constituted, the company consisted, after Astor, of Duncan McDougal, Donald McKenzie, Alexander MacKay, and David and Robert Stuart. Wilson Price Hunt, of New Jersey, was afterward added to lead the land party. The clerks were Gabriel Franchere, Alexander Ross, Wm. Matthews, James Levevre, Russel Farnham, Thomas McKay, Donal McGillis, Ovide de Montigny, Francis B. Pillet, Donald McLennan, Wm. Wallace. Mechanics—Stephen Weekes, armorer; Wm. Cannon, millwright. Boatmen—Three Lepensee, two Bellaux; Jacques La Fontaine, Benj. Roussel, Michel La Framboise, Giles Le Clerc. Passengers, 33; crew, 31.

The captain of the first ship despatched, and which took out the Canadian partners and the clerks, was Jonathan Thorn and the crew was American. The vessel was the "Tonquin," a staunch and well-equipped ship, of 290 tons burden, ten guns and twenty men. Take it all in all, with the mixture of Scotch, French, and Americans, probably the fifty-four men composing the company that set sail in the "Tonquin" for the Columbia River, September 8, 1810, represented more elements of discord than could have been assembled in any other spot in America. Irving himself, writing with admiration of Astor, and with an eye to his patronage humorously

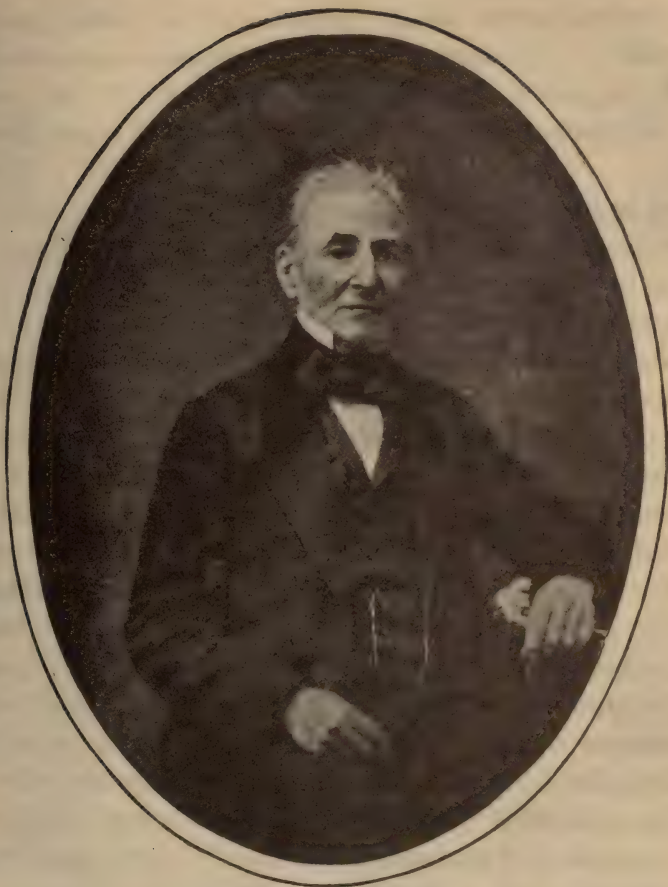
speaks of this as a "variegated band of adventurers." It is evident that Astor, if he understood at all the men whom he had lumped into his scheme, relied entirely upon mechanical forces to keep them together. The hope of gain with the partners, and a position and distinction that they could never aspire to in their own country, he deemed sufficient to call forth their best exertions. The clerks and voyageurs, placed in a situation demanding their loyalty, would easily be led by the partners; and the sense of authority and responsibility to his employer would control Captain Thorn, who was a strict disciplinarian and would manage his crew. To Astor, no doubt, a man was a man, and put him in certain conditions he was bound to act up to his best ability and sound sense.

But the voyage itself, not to mention the after history, discredited all these expectations. McKay proved to be almost the only man among the partners that showed experience or good judgment. He had been the trusted friend and partner of Alexander Mackenzie on his two trips, and had the material in him to manage a great business. It was possibly a little distrust of that very ability that led Astor to give his proxy to a man much the inferior of McKay—Duncan McDougal. David Stuart seems to have been a jolly and agreeable man, understanding the fur business, but without leadership. The clerks were nearly all young men, some of them just from school, with ideas gained from Virgil and "Robinson Cru-



soe " rather than from trade and commerce, and the voyage was an adventure to be used in a literary manner rather than a stern schooling for hard service. The journals of Franchere and Ross, indeed, rank well as literature of that class, the former having been favorably compared with Defoe himself. As to Thorn, he was not of a capacity above a good first mate. He could probably have never become a captain in the navy, nor of a merchant vessel. He had the harsh discipline serviceable to the master above him, and proverbial to the lieutenant. His one good quality, honest fidelity to his employer's interest, became his chief fault. He was narrow, unsympathetic, arbitrary, harsh, suspicious, and easily imposed upon. The voyage became a series of petty disagreements between the partners, chiefly the pompous McDougal, and the captain.

Thorn became morose and placed himself often in the wrong. The old "Constitution" gave the "Tonquin" safe conduct to sea, as it was reported that a British man-of-war from Halifax was hovering off the harbor to overhaul the American and impress the Canadians. Scarcely had she left them to the ocean and night, before Thorn ordered such petty restrictions as putting out all lights at eight o'clock, treating the partners as common seamen. He also ordered unnecessary, and often mortifying examinations of their baggage, and in enforcing cleanliness upon the fellows as they became seasick, or in requiring them to take open-air exercise, was harsh and



**GABRIEL FRANCHERE**

**A clerk of John Jacob Astor at Astoria.**





disagreeable in his manner. In his correspondence he shows a constant irritation and contempt; in their journals the clerks show an equal dislike, but mixed with much humor, of which Thorn was entirely devoid.

At the Falkland Islands, where he was obliged to stop for water, he became greatly irritated because the partners, who went goose-hunting, neglected to return at the appointed time. After one or two threats to leave them on the islands, as commanders all the way from Magellan down had sometimes done with refractory men, he actually attempted to carry out the punishment. Stuart and McDougal were hunting, and Franchere and some others had found the graves of some shipwrecked men, and seeing that the inscriptions upon the head boards were worn and likely soon to be effaced, considered it a great act of good will, or piety, to trace them over. The signal gun was fired, and the young clerks hastily finished their work and signaled to the partners, who seemed not to hear it. They soon collected, eight all told, but to their horror saw the ship already with sails set and under way. They flung themselves into the boat, and pulled off after her desperately, but although they were clearly seen, their distress was not heeded, and the ship kept her course, ever gaining greater distance while they rowed for their lives on the open sea. On board ship, when it became evident that it was the intention of the captain to leave the two partners and clerks, the excitement became intense. The

nephew of David Stuart, taking a pistol, advanced to the quarter deck, and threatened Thorn with death unless the vessel was hauled to. The wind lulling somewhat, and coming ahead, gave an excuse for slacking the speed, and the company of frightened and angry partners and clerks was taken aboard. It would not be believed that Thorn intended abandoning the men if he had not himself so stated. He wrote to Astor:—"Had the wind (unfortunately) not hauled ahead soon after leaving the harbor's mouth, I should positively have left them; and indeed I cannot but think it an unfortunate circumstance for you that it so happened, for the first loss in this instance would, in my opinion, have proved the best, as they seem to have no idea of the value of property, nor any apparent regard for your interest, although interwoven with their own."

The reason assigned by the captain, that the wind hauled ahead, is undoubtedly erroneous; as only a calm would have stopped the vessel; she could have easily sailed away if the captain had still wished. The reason assigned by the clerks, that young Stuart threatened the captain's life, was believed by them to be the true one, and a certain contempt for a man who could be cowed was added to their hate, to which his action had brought their first dislike. The discipline attempted in this case by the captain was unjustifiable, except for mutiny, and shows him to have been wholly unfit for command. On the other hand the partners and clerks undoubtedly had very small

regard for his authority, and often treated him shabbily. They annoyed him with trifling requests, and showed interest in matters that seemed to a seaman of but boyish concern. As he said, "They were determined to have it said that they had been in Africa, and therefore insisted on my stopping at the Cape de Verdes. Next they said the ship must stop on the coast of Patagonia, for they must see the large and uncommon inhabitants of that place. Then they must go to the island where Robinson Crusoe had so long lived. And lastly they were determined to see the handsome inhabitants of Easter Island."

After the affair at the Falklands there was less open quarreling, but at the Sandwich Islands there was great disagreement as to authority. It was the policy of Astor to establish friendship and trade relations with the Hawaiians, and McDougal rightly, as his representative, took the initiative in meeting the various chiefs, or *eris*, and the king. He conducted these meetings in a manner flattering to the pride and ostentation of the islanders, whose disposition he reckoned pretty accurately. He also made a good impression, and gained what he was after, the trade in hogs and goats, the promise of traffic, and a dozen natives, or Kanakas, as watermen, or servants, for the fort to be built on the Columbia. For the islanders and the trade with them Thorn felt the most profound contempt, except to get hogs, the purchase of which was from the king only, and required much negotiation. He did not understand



in the least McDougal's policy in pleasing the natives, and laid all that he did to mere childish love of sport on his own part. He writes:—"It would be difficult to imagine the frantic gambols that are daily played off here; sometimes dressing in red coats, and otherwise very fantastically, and collecting a number of ignorant natives around them, and telling them that they are the great *cares* of the Northwest, and making arrangements for sending three or four vessels yearly to them from the coast with spars, etc.; while those very natives cannot furnish even a hog to the ship. Then dressing in Highland kilts and plaids, and making similar arrangements, with presents of rum, wine, or anything that is at hand. Then taking a number of clerks and men on shore to the very spot on which Captain Cook was killed, and each fetching off a piece of the rock or tree that was touched by a shot. Then sitting down with some white or some native that can be a little understood, and collecting the history of these islands, of Tahmaahmaah's war, the curiosities of the islands, etc., preparatory to the history of their voyages; and the collection is indeed ridiculously contemptible. To enumerate the thousand instances of ignorance, filth, etc., or to particularize all the frantic gambols that are daily practised would require volumes."

These scenes were in fact simply re-enacting the festivities among the natives and voyageurs and fur traders in the forests of Canada, and McDougal and his associates were in their element, and the plan of

sending timbers to Kameahmeah in return for supplies and harbor dues, so far from being foolish was very well calculated. This sagacious savage had risen to the position of king over the entire Hawaiian group, he owned as many as twenty schooners and two ships; he even traded to Canton, and had learned from heavy harbor dues demanded there to charge such dues and pilotage in his own ports. He also enjoyed the monopoly of the pork trade, and had associated with him in his government a capable white man, named Young, who had been a survivor from the massacre of the "Fair American," under young Metcalf. It was therefore sheer impertinence and ignorance in Thorn to either hinder or to underrate the arrangements proposed by McDougal.

Thorn also became suspicious, as these negotiations proceeded, and as he was often reminded by McDougal that himself, not Thorn, was the proxy of Astor, that the Canadians were forming a plot to seize the ship for themselves and engage in trade on their own account in the south seas, and never proceed to the Columbia. His harsh discipline was renewed, but now against his own seamen, one of whom, Ames, was left ashore although frantically pleading to be taken aboard. Franchere also, while busied about watering the casks, and watching some of the natives who were bringing brackish water, was nearly left. The voyage from the islands up to the Columbia was therefore even more disagreeable than

before. The gay Canadians had been charmed with the beauty of the tropics, and as the colder and stormy skies of the north were reached their spirits fell, and gathering in groups among themselves they talked in the native *patois*, or seeing that the Gaelic, which they well knew, irritated the captain, conversed in this. He believed this positive proof of their secret designs against the ship and himself, and kept in constant readiness for an outbreak.

When at last the coast of Oregon was sighted, after a period of storms, it was in the gray of spring, the shores being heavy and cold compared with the brilliancy of the Hawaiians, and the distant mountains being topped with snow. The dun shores, the piebald appearance of the higher ranges of mountains, and the scudding clouds and tempestuous sea, dampened the spirits of the men, and in Thorn it seemed to bring out all the rashness and intemperance of his nature. To no one more than to him, probably, does the Columbia owe the reputation of a dangerous entrance. Irving, to be sure, has described the incidents with so much interest, and has made such a place in literature for his history of the founding of Astoria, that he is responsible also for giving the Columbia an evil fame. It was as a matter of fact a stormy time, and great care should have been used in crossing a bar in the bad weather of March; but the reckless loss of life and the narrow escape of the vessel itself must be ascribed to a captain whose mind was hardly well balanced.





WASHINGTON IRVING



The mouth of the river was reached the 22d of March, 1811. The breakers along the shore were clearly seen, and were of unusual force. Indeed the aspect of the surf on the weather coast at this point in winter is by no means reassuring. The breakers also seemed to cover the entire entrance with foam from cape to cape. Instead, as was done by Gray, of waiting for calmer weather, so that the channel might be distinguished between the spits, and then directing the course of the vessel himself from the masthead, Thorn stood within three leagues onto the entrance, and at one o'clock, just as the northwest wind was roughening the bar to a dangerous and unrecognizable condition, he ordered the first mate to take a boat and sound the channel. The mate, Mr. Fox, was not supplied with sailors, but voyageurs, or landsmen, unaccustomed to rough water. The whaleboat, moreover, in which they were ordered to go, was old and not in good condition. Fox at once saw the danger of the service to be performed and remonstrated, but the captain was not to be moved. Fox then conferred with the partners, and added that his uncle had been drowned here four years since, and he was but going to lay his own bones beside his uncle's. Their remonstrances acted only to make the captain more inflexible, and with the taunt, "If you are afraid of water you should have never left Boston, Mr. Fox," his order prevailed. The whaleboat, improperly manned, was let down into the dangerous and unknown waters, and for a time



was watched amid the foaming waves. It finally disappeared and was never again seen.

After standing near the bar until nightfall, the "Tonquin" steered off so as to gain sea room, and in the morning found that she had drifted northward, and near the land—the dangerous north shore where so many unwary vessels have been carried by the inshore current. The pinnace, with David Stuart and McKay set off to learn something if possible of the whaleboat, but finding no landing worked back to the ship. A favorable wind now rising another effort was made to gain the harbor. When the "Tonquin" was within about three miles of the breakers, which spread nearly in a semicircle from Cape Hancock, on the north side, being formed on a spit from the north that protruded farther and overlapped the spit from the south, the channel lying between the two, the pinnace was again manned, and with Mumford, the second mate, was sent ahead to sound for four fathoms. Not the slightest allowance seems to have been made for the condition of tide, or force of wind, or ability of the boat to get back. The return was made with much difficulty, but no soundings suitable were found. The order was then given to Aikin, an able seaman, to whom the command of the schooner to be built was intended, to take the pinnace and try farther north; he was accompanied by the sailmaker, the armorer and two Sandwich Islanders, and ordered to go ahead while the ship followed under easy sail. This was wholly unnecessary

and the peril of having a crew out in the water as well as the vessel to look after should never have been incurred. When the signal was given for them to return they came within pistol shot, but the current was now ebbing so strongly that the ship was missed and the boat was carried into the breakers. A universal horror was felt as the pinnace was seen to turn side to the sea and go down. But the vessel was herself entering the breakers ahead, and reaching shallow water struck repeatedly; but at length was carried over and came to in seven fathoms, where she cast anchor. The wind lulled and night came on; but the situation was found very critical. The tide, which had flowed for a time, now ebbed again so violently as to threaten to carry the ship from her moorings onto the breakers. But when it flowed again, a south wind also springing up, they unloosed, while it was still night, and rode easily into Baker's Bay within the shelter of the cape. This was fortunate, as the storm increased, and their position would have been perilous in the extreme where they first anchored.

The next morning diligent search was made for the lost men. Weekes and one Islander, who had been swamped in the pinnace but had righted it again, and made a landing on the north beach, were found. These were the only survivors of Aikin's boat; but Fox and his men were never again heard of. As Irving concludes:—"Thus eight men were lost on the first approach to the coast." This loss was

wholly unnecessary, and was due entirely to the arbitrary disposition and rash judgment of Captain Thorn. It seems almost incredible, also, that in an affair of such importance, when so much depended upon skill from the beginning, it did not occur to Astor to employ a regular pilot from among the many seamen who had frequented the Columbia River. Far better also would it have been if Thorn had waited a month longer in the Sandwich Islands, and had allowed McDougal to complete his arrangements with the king; and not have attempted the Columbia bar until some time in April, the usual month for vessels to enter, when the "Tonquin" might have met with experienced company.\*

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\* Dominis, in the Owyhee, 1829, spent a week surveying the channel, buoying it out with blocks of wood, and crossed the bar in perfect safety.



## CHAPTER X

EVENTFUL YEARS; THE CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS



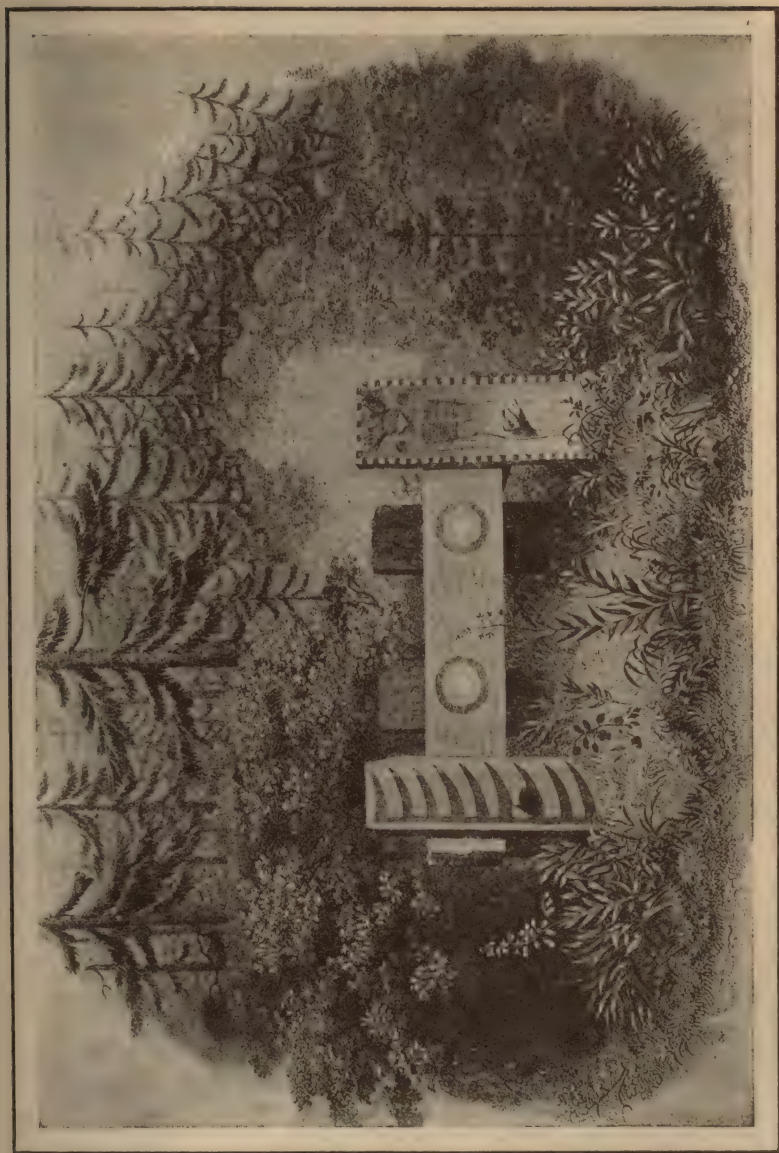
IN tracing the history of Oregon we are constantly impressed with the insignificance of numbers. The actors in the events were but a minimum. The occupation and settlement of the Columbia River Valley, which required almost precisely fifty years in order to demonstrate to whom it should go, was but by an handful of men—the smallest number possible to represent the principles concerned. The occupation of the valley of the Columbia carried with it that of the Puget Sound Basin, and shortly afterward that of California. From this naturally came the occupation of the Russian possessions, and from such a vantage on the Pacific Ocean has naturally grown the occupation of the Pacific Ocean for American commerce, industry, and ideas. The greatness of this result stands therefore in sharp contrast with the infinitesimal force concerned in its performance. But all the more are the principles that underlay the movement emphasized; it was American principles that won Oregon, and just enough and no more Americans than were needed to carry and establish the principles, were spared to accomplish the task.

As indicated in the last chapter the expedition organized by Astor, although so brilliant in design, was doomed to failure from the manner of its composition. The surviving interest in the movement was chiefly from the land party of Wilson P. Hunt, who himself, and with the men that he collected, found new routes across the continent, opened the



fur country to Americans, and brought a number of the permanent settlers to Oregon, who, as afterward demonstrated, could not have been spared from the little band that brought another star—or rather a full half-dozen stars—to the flag of liberty. But before tracing the steps of this indefatigable American to the mouth of the Columbia, it is necessary to mention the tragic fate of the “Tonquin.”

After crossing the Columbia River bar, as seen in the last chapter, amid unnecessary perils, and losing eight men by attempting to sound in frail boats a channel that could have been better observed by the plan of Gray from the masthead, the “Tonquin” made all haste to discharge cargo destined for establishing the fort and trading post, and was ready for sea again. During this interval McDougal, who showed himself an energetic man on land, had explored the shores of the Columbia to the mouth, and decided upon Point George, as named by Vancouver, as the best place for his post. This was certainly well selected, as it was upon the south side of the river, about ten miles within the harbor, and had perfect shelter from the south winds under the wooded hill. It was accessible from the sea, and had the advantage over any place on Baker’s Bay in being more easily reached by canoes or batteaux from up the Columbia—the long stretch from Tongue Point to Chinook Point, and rounding into Baker’s Bay, was exposed to the high winds of winter, and was a broad expanse of water upon which under these gales the



TOMB OF THE INDIAN CHIEF COMCOMLEY AT ASTORIA

After a print published in "A Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the years 1838-1842, by Captain Charles Wilkes, U. S. N." Published in Philadelphia in 1849.





seas ran almost like the ocean waves. To the cove in this bight between Tongue Point and Point George, or Smith Point as now styled, the "Tonquin" was sailed with the tides and under sunny skies—the weather having cleared and exposed to view a region no longer wild and solitary, but green as the tropics, brilliant with spring verdure and flowers, and with great numbers of birds. Many of the natives also appeared, and the river seemed alive with their canoes. These were very friendly, and gave effective assistance both in finding suitable location, and in case of accidents; McDougal himself being once tipped over in his canoe while trying to cross Baker's Bay, and but for Comcomly, who followed in his canoe fearing the disaster, would have been drowned; the chief factor was taken to the chief's house and entertained over night, and there, moreover, first saw his future wife, Comcomley's daughter. This chief is described as "the richest and most powerful on the river; he is a short, elderly man, blind of one eye; he has three wives, and many children. His eldest son, Casacas, is a strong, well-made man, about five feet six inches high; he succeeds his father in the government of the Chinooks; he is no friend to white men; he styles himself Prince of Wales. Selechel is the next son; he styles himself Duke of York; he is a small man, and well disposed toward the whites."\* Another name of Comcomly was Madsah, meaning Thunder.

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\* Peter Corney.

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The weather proved so good that rapid progress was made in erecting the fort, and ground for a garden spot was cleared. The name given was Astoria, in honor of the founder of the enterprise. Much interest was taken by the clerks and young men in the settlement, and among the wonders of the region was a spruce tree above the fort, on the hillside, which, until the discovery of the Sequoias in California, was supposed to be the largest in the world; it measured 57 feet girth; and it was intended by the young gentlemen, as they were careful to designate themselves, to build when they got leisure a stairway around this immense trunk, and place a balcony and outlook near the top; but, as Franchere remarks, more pressing work deferred this indefinitely.

By the first of June the "Tonquin" was ready for sea. Captain Thorn was morbidly anxious to get away from his associates, and to pursue his trading at the north. With him went McKay, the most experienced and trusty man in the entire company. The Columbia was left June 5th, and the bar passed in safety. In a few days the west coast of Vancouver's Island was reached, and a fine harbor in latitude 50 degrees 6 minutes north was entered. This has been spoken of as Neweettie by Irving; but by the Indians of the Columbia is known as Clayoquot. Full particulars of the disagreement that soon arose with Captain Thorn and the Indians need not be given; nor, indeed, can be fully known. Thorn, however, proved to be as little adapted to trading with In-

dians as to dealing with Canadian partners. The advice of McKay was disregarded, and natives in large numbers were allowed to come on board. On one occasion, for the reason that these shrewd traffickers, who had learned many Yankee tricks in fifteen years' intercourse with white men, would not trade on the terms he offered, Thorn is said to have kicked a chief overboard. This, if true, may have incited the natives to seek revenge; or, more likely, having been allowed to come on board in large numbers—which was contrary to the directions of Astor, and the strong protests of McKay—they made a plot to capture the ship from the mere motive of plunder, as had been attempted in the case of Robert Gray by Indians of the same vicinity.

One morning, before the captain and McKay were up, the savages came on board in great numbers, without being accompanied by their women. The officer of the watch was alarmed and called to the officers. Thorn himself, coming on deck, seeing the situation, ordered sail made and anchor up; while the Indians sat silently between the guns waiting for the signal of attack. They were apparently unarmed, but in reality had knives concealed in the long folds of their hair. While the sailors were heaving at the windlass and the rattling of the chain about the capstan was mingled with the sing-song "Heavo," the war-whoop rung out, the stolid Indian figures at once sprang to their work, the murderous knives were drawn, and the unprepared Americans were



massacred at their duties. Thorn, who was aft, defended himself for some time with a simple clasp knife; killing a number of his assailants; but was at length overpowered. McKay was felled and thrown overboard. The sailors in the rigging, making sail, slid down, and some reached the cabin, where they found guns, and firing on the Indians cleared the decks. They were at a loss for some time what to do, some advising to attempt to work the ship and leave the harbor. But this seemed impossible with the small force and the direction of the wind. It was decided therefore to send three of the men in a boat for the Columbia River. One, who was wounded, preferred to stay on board. This one is given by Irving as Lewis, the ship's clerk; but by others was said to be the blacksmith. After the boat left and had disappeared at sea, the white who was still on board arranged to fire the magazine, and signaled to the natives to come on the ship. They saw but one man, and suspected no danger; they were curious also to examine the craft, and not easily restrained from securing their booty, accepted the invitation, and were shown by him the various cargo. In a very short time they were ripping open bales of goods, breaking boxes, and completing the sack of the prize. While thus preoccupied the train to the magazine was fired, and the blacksmith jumped overboard. In due order the magazine was exploded, the ship blown up, and almost the entire population of the village on ship board plundering, was destroyed. The black-

smith—himself not killed—was picked up by some of the Indians, and the report was circulated that he was kept among them as a slave to make knives; but was never suffered to be seen by white men. The latter part of this report seems in accord with Indian superstition, the tribe wishing it understood that they still possessed the worker of iron and fire, who possessed the medicine which wrought such havoc. The account of Irving, that it was Lewis, who was incurably wounded and himself shared in the fate of the tribe that massacred his captain, is equally probable. A supposition that the magazine was ignorantly lighted by the Indians themselves is another explanation. The report of this awful retribution upon the tribe that attempted to capture the white men's ship, was circulated among the natives of the entire coast, and great fear of the interior of ships, and dread of even going on board, made this, perhaps, the last attempt of the kind. The three sailors who sought to escape to the Columbia were compelled by contrary wind to put ashore, and took refuge in a small cove; but were found by the Indians and mercilessly killed.

Peter Corney, whose account is substantially given above, says that he obtained it in part from Mr. McDougal, and in part from the natives "with whom," he adds, "I have had frequent intercourse, and whom I invariably found it to my interest to use well, as they are sensible of the slightest attention, and are prone to revenge the slightest insult." As this af-

fair of the "Tonquin" was the first serious trouble with Indians, it may be remarked that all troubles arose from ignorance of the character or the ideas of the North American natives. Revenge for an insult, blood for blood, belief in "medicine," or the power of certain individuals to exert a beneficial or a malignant influence, or spell; and the conception of the earth, air, and water as the abode of the dead and their own future abode in the spiritual state, were all grained into the Indian mind, and appeared rather as unconscious traits than as recognized motives. Not until absolutely degraded and rendered insensible and powerless would an Indian allow any of these deeply wrought sentiments to be crossed, and he deemed it far preferable to die in their defense than to live and suffer the disgrace of their violation. It was the ignorant oversight of their sentiment as to what constituted an insult that led Thorn to lose his ship and his own life.

Probably fully as much, or more harm, was done almost immediately after the news of the loss of the "Tonquin" was received at Astoria. This was by exciting the fears of the Indians on the Columbia along the line of their superstition of "medicine." McDougal, after learning the loss of the "Tonquin," became apprehensive that when the weakness of the party at Astoria was known, and before Hunt could arrive, the Indians would conspire to attack the fort itself. Of this there seems to have been little ground; and Comcomly never proved otherwise than faithful.



The Clatsops were also fast friends. Indians from a distance, who visited the river during the fishing season, would very naturally entertain plots for attacking and destroying a trading post in a territory not their own; but the Chinooks and Clatsops were fully aware of its advantages and the importance it gave them. But not trusting entirely to their friendship, McDougal is said to have assembled the chiefs and very gravely informed them that he held a medicine of which they were all in great dread. This was nothing less than the smallpox; he showed them the phial in which it was confined, but once let the cork loose, he said, it would be dispersed and work death among their people. Unless they proved entirely faithful this was what he would do. They protested their friendship and begged him not to take out the cork. He became known thus as "the great Small Pox chief." The results of such deceptions led actually, as might have been anticipated, to the idea among the Indians that smallpox, measles, malaria, and all the diseases that followed in the train of white intercourse were scattered among them purposely by white men. The men who exercised actually a controlling influence over the Indians never thus wrought upon their ignorance.

The middle of July, 1812, the first expedition of the Northwesters appeared at Astoria. This was under the lead of David Thompson, astronomer and partner of the Canadian Company. He had been despatched from Montreal to occupy the mouth of the

river before Astor's party could reach it; but before crossing the Rocky Mountains had been deserted by all but eight of his men. With these, after reaching the Columbia, he had descended in a canoe to Astoria. Conformably to instructions he had taken observations at the mouths of the principal streams entering the Columbia, and had set up British flags and taken possession of the country. It was once more, as in the case of Vancouver, and down the history for fifty years, the British sleuth immediately on the tracks of the American. Thompson was a man of unusual intelligence, worthy of the company of Alexander Mackenzie. At Astoria he was well received by McDougal, as an old comrade, and was not only entertained but furnished with supplies for making the return trip. This last was against the advice of Stuart, who considered this treatment should not be accorded to a rival. It is possible, indeed, that if Thompson had been sent by his company into a situation from which he could not extricate himself, and his company could not relieve him, he might have been forced to give up his connection with the Northwesters, and join Astor; or else accept a passage home in the next ship of the Pacific Fur Company entering the river—in either case being defeated of his purpose to establish his company in the Columbia River Valley.

Stuart and Ross set off the same month for the upper Columbia, and established a fort at the mouth of the Okanogan. These trading "forts" were, of

course, properly posts rather than military points. The trader lived entirely in the good-will of the natives, having no force to defend himself, and being secure from robbery and murder mainly by convincing the Indian chiefs that it was greatly to their interest to protect him and his goods and to maintain trade with the whites. The development of this interest among the Indians of Oregon, and thereby the gradual extension of trade and white men's authority, is the vital point in the history now succeeding.

Having seen the disaster of the "Tonquin," which put an end for the present to the exploitation of the rich fur trade along the Alaskan coast; the successful start of Astoria at Point George; and the successful beginnings of trapping on the upper Columbia, together with the unsuccessful effort of the Northwesters to occupy the Columbia in advance of Astor, we are ready to trace the steps of the American partners across the continent.

Mr. Hunt, of Trenton, New Jersey, was a man "scrupulously faithful in his dealings, amicable in his disposition, and of most accommodating manners." He had been engaged in trade at St. Louis and had there become acquainted with Indians and trappers, but not on their "native heath." He had, however, all the virtues of the American merchant, self-reliance and cool judgment being conspicuously present in his make up. To him was intrusted a most remarkable enterprise. He was to organize out of



any existing material that he could find, an expedition across the continent; and for this object he was himself equipped with nothing but money. Of this he had abundance, but from that very fact was exposed to all the dangers and errors that a man with money is liable to incur. The fact that he pursued his purposes so resolutely, and, on the whole, made such wise use of his money, shows great ability. As his immediate companion was assigned Donald McKenzie, a name to be remembered in Oregon history, and interwoven with the nomenclature of our State. He was a practical ranger of the woods and rivers, having been for ten years in the service of the Northwest Company, and understood thoroughly the disposition of the Indian and how to trade with him. He was strong, brave, and a good shot.

Aside from the general purpose of Astor to lead a party across North America, and to look out suitable routes and mark desirable places up the Missouri and down the Columbia for the chain of trading posts contemplated, and the money to do this with, the entire enterprise and expedition had to be created as he moved. This was totally different from the Lewis and Clark expedition, which was made up at the start with men who knew each other, and had the strongest affinity. Hunt first proceeded to Montreal, even then a city of historic renown, overlooking the rapids named for "China"—as some say—on supposition that the great river that here foamed from the westward led to Anian and the kingdom

of Cathay; with Mount Royal as the commanding landmark. Here he obtained a fur trader's canoe, such as is peculiar to voyaging in British America; being capable of carrying a load of four tons, and requiring eight paddlers, but made of birch bark, and so light as to be transported around rapids or waterfalls, or from lake to lake, on the backs of the voyageurs. Into this his goods were packed, being made up in about ninety-pound bundles which the paddlers might carry when necessary on their shoulders. A crew was also procured from among the watermen around the town, and the voyage began. The route led by way of the Ottawa River and the chain of lakes to Mackinaw.

At this trading post of the waters joining the two great lakes, Huron and Michigan, the main party was to be gathered. This was the embarking point of the two great Canadian companies—the Northwesters and the Southwesters. The men of the north assumed the greater airs, and considered themselves the better men. This was at the time when the Northwesters were pushing their operations with great recklessness, with a view to compelling a union with the Hudson's Bay Company, and they made free use of firearms and liquors. It was not found easy to employ men from the motley collection of Frenchmen, Indians, and half-breeds, and possession of money rather deterred than aided Mr. Hunt. It was soon known that his terms were good, and the best men therefore stood out for better terms, and they

urged the dangers of the journey, and demanded advanced wages. Having once obtained an advance, his men were in no hurry to go, but spent their money freely and were able also to run bills which had to be paid before the post-keepers would let the party move. Here Mr. Hunt was joined by Ramsay Crooks, whom he had asked to become a partner, and who was especially fitted to be of service in the great enterprise. Crooks was a Scotchman by birth, but had served with the Northwesters, and had had practical experience on the upper Missouri. He gave information of the dangers that must be encountered, especially from the Sioux Indians. These people did not wish the white traders to pass through their country, and made a practice of attacking the boat parties as they ascended, hiding on the bluffs and shooting from every advantage upon the trappers as they toiled slowly against the heavy current of the turbid stream. He had himself, in company with a partner named McClellan been attacked and plundered, and lost all but life. Beyond the Sioux were the Blackfoot Indians, a people still more hostile and savage. It was decided therefore that thirty men were not enough, and that they should proceed to St. Louis and increase the number to sixty. It was not until about the middle of August that they got off from Mackinaw, and early in September reached the old French border town.

This was then the point of departure for the Indian country, and representatives of all the tribes as





RAMSEY CROOKS

A partner of John Jacob Astor.



far west as the Rockies might be occasionally found within its environs. The French settlers with their creole descendants were still a large if not the larger part of the population; Canadian boatmen had more recently made this their wintering point, and Kentucky and Virginia riflemen, who became among the first of the Rocky Mountain men, were known by their lank, raw-boned figures, independent stride, and Southern dialect. Here Hunt found peculiar difficulties. The Missouri Fur Company had been flourishing several years under the energetic leadership of Manuel Lisa, a Spaniard, and now enrolled some 250 employees. The company had made efforts to extend its operations into the Rocky Mountains, having sent, as noticed heretofore, Alexander Henry into the Blackfoot country on the Yellowstone, from which he had been forced to leave and had crossed the mountains and made a fort on the Henry Fork of the Snake. It was not known at that time in St. Louis what had become of him and Lisa was organizing an expedition to go in search, and incidentally to extend the operations of his company. The appearance of Hunt and his party was not welcome to Lisa. Every new competitor in the field acted to confuse the Indians, and competition in the Indian trade would soon run the price of furs up to a prohibitive figure. On general trading principles, therefore, Lisa sought to embarrass Hunt. At St. Louis, Louis Labonte, and probably Joseph Gervais and Etienne Lucier, were enlisted.



It was found too late to attempt to follow the steps of Lewis and Clark and winter as high up as the Mandan country. It was deemed less expensive to winter outside of St. Louis, and to try to keep the party together and not allow rivals to win the men away. Following the analogy of the Canadians the Americans made use of the rivers as their highways; though the Missouri was so swift and difficult as to make this much slower as a mode of travel than by land on horseback. The Hunt party, with three boats, left St. Louis the latter part of October, and reached a camping place suitable for winter by the middle of November, when the river was closed from ice. At this camp it was joined by Robert McClellan, the old-time partner of Ramsay Crooks, and a trapper of the Missouri. He is described as a self-willed but very courageous man, and a valuable acquisition. A leading motive with him was to be able to pass through the country of the Sioux, where he had been robbed, with a party large enough to force its way. It was at this winter camp, also, that John Day, whose name has been given to two streams in Oregon, one a tide creek near Astoria and the other the remarkable river of Middle Oregon, joined the expedition. He is described by Irving as "a hunter from the backwoods of Virginia, who had been several years in the service of Mr. Crooks, and of other traders. He was about forty years of age, six feet two inches high, and straight as an Indian; with an elastic step as if he trod on springs, and a handsome,

open, manly countenance." He had deteriorated somewhat from his first vigor, but was still equal to Rocky Mountain life—though at last suffering a melancholy fate. At St. Louis a Mr. Joseph Miller, an educated gentleman, and at one time an officer in the army, but of too independent a spirit to enjoy military life, was added to the company. While the party was camping on the Nodowa Hunt made a return trip to St. Louis, securing some more hunters, but losing them on account of Lisa's opposition; but getting as interpreter Pierre Dorion, a son of the Dorion who accompanied Lewis and Clark across the country.

Interesting men met with by Hunt were John Colter, who was in the Lewis and Clark expedition, and who gave full accounts of his journey and further adventures alone among the Indians; and Daniel Boone, then in the white winter of his age, but still on the crest of westward immigration.

In was a little past the middle of April when Hunt arrived at the winter camp again, and spring was already opening. The snakes were unlimbering from their winter catalepsy and beginning to crawl into the sunshine that came out hot between the showers. Wild pigeons in countless flocks were beginning their flights. An extremely interesting character, who had joined Hunt at St. Louis, was Bradbury, an English botanist, being rather a traveler and adventurer and very much of a good fellow.

The weather improved, the ice left the river, and the party resumed its march. It consisted of sixty persons, forty of whom were Canadian voyageurs. John Reed, an Irishman, is mentioned as clerk; four boats were required, one of which was large, and mounted a swivel and two howitzers. As afterward learned this manner of progression, by boats up the Missouri, and the route itself, was not the best. Wagons beat boats almost two to one in time, and the Missouri route was far longer and more difficult than the Platte route; but all this had to be learned. These expeditions were modeled after the Canadian style, which consumed two years, or even more, in going to and from the Rocky Mountains; and the Americans could not at once compress the journey across the country into six months, as they afterwards did.

A deflection to the southward of the Lewis and Clark route, and so much the nearer to the famous South Pass, was in fact chosen by this party of Hunt's. This was an actual gain to the cause of American emigration; though it remained for a return party of this same expedition to discover the advantages of the Platte itself. As the party advanced up the river the various Indian tribes were reported to be in a very disturbed condition. Dorion heard constant rumors that the northern and southern Indians were at odds. Prairie fires were seen at night illuminating the horizon, which indicated war parties on retreat. A band of Sioux who had sacri-



ficed all to the Great Spirit surprised and alarmed the company by rushing naked into the camp and apparently bent on self-destruction by attacking the whites. The same violent class of fighters noticed by Lewis and Clark, warriors maddened by a defeat or devoted to death and seeking only a desperate end, were still conspicuous among the tribes, and reported by Dorion as abroad early this season. This condition of unrest and distraction was not the normal condition of the Indians of the western part of North America; but had been induced by the inequality in force introduced by white traders, and especially the Northwesters. The tribe chiefly influenced was the Sioux—who consisted of several bands, or nations, the Tetons and Ogallalabs being the larger ones. All the Sioux were an active and capable, but naturally savage, or spirited people. They were splendidly built, of keen understanding, relentless and given to enthusiasms, such as has latterly been evidenced in desperate outbreaks, ghost dances and the like. They were a cleanly people, comparatively, and not unfriendly except when their interests were endangered. They had come from the north, the Winnipeg or Athabasca Lake country being their original home. The occupation of the eastern part of North America by whites was slowly turning the red men back on their tracks, and the natural movement of the tribes was now reversed. Toward the sunrise had been their motto; now their faces were toward the sunset.

The Sioux had fallen greatly under the influence

of the Canadian fur traders. From them they obtained the fire water that roused the barbarian; and also were supplied by them with firearms and horses, and with these three acquisitions—the liquor that roused the love of war and the chase to the point of fury, the firearms that made them vastly superior to their hereditary enemies to the west and south, and the horses that gave them the fleetness of the wind—they were led to the buffalo country of the Missouri. Here they quickly pressed their Blackfoot and Crow neighbors westward, who in turn pressed upon the Shoshones and Flatheads, who had originally occupied some of the best buffalo grounds of the Yellowstone and upper Missouri. They also pressed the Mandans, Minaterrees, and Poncas. They made raids far down upon the country of the Platte, and even the Arkansas, fighting with the Pawnees, and perhaps Comanches. Their methods of fight and of the chase were far more bloody and destructive than heretofore known to the Indians. Tribes who had been respected in their own country, and whose little patches of corn, beans, and squashes were not molested by war parties, were now entirely uprooted, and made strictly nomadic, being kept on the march and in constant flight. The Shoshones were obliged to retreat to the fastnesses of the mountains, and visit the buffalo country only by stealth or in company with the Flatheads and Nez Percés. The slaughter of buffaloes by the mounted Sioux was enormous—vast herds of these animals

being chased into the Bad Lands of the Little Missouri, and forced by the hundreds or thousands over the bluffs, the mangled bodies of the great brutes, or perhaps with broken limbs or horns and not yet dead, but to be despatched by the unmounted followers, being left to the poor of the people or as a prey to the wolves, coyotes, and buzzards.

Besides a great revival of savagery and spirit of conquest among the Sioux by this superiority given as a consequence of trade with the Northwest Fur Company, they shrewdly saw that it was not to their interest to allow the American companies to penetrate to the country of their enemies, and arm them also with guns. They preferred to make excursions themselves, seize horses, furs, and buffalo hides, and bring them for trade to the posts of the Canadians. For this reason they looked upon any American parties as fair game. It has been said that they were incited to this by the Northwesters; this is probable enough, as even the American fur companies often provoked the Indians to plunder rivals, it being charged by Crooks and McLellan that their losses were due to the whispers of Lisa of the Missouri Fur Company, and McLellan vowed that once he should find the Spaniard in the Indian country he would shoot him. The Northwesters, too, were soon after this attacking and plundering the forts of the Hudson's Bay Company. In a wild country, where savages may be played as pawns against rivals, what traders might do advantageously to themselves may



be taken as almost certain to have been done by some of them.

Indian disturbances promised so badly, or well, that even Lisa, though having a mortal enemy in both McLellan and Dorion, proposed to Hunt to go in company up the Missouri; but the latter was distrustful, fearing that the Spaniard only intended to prejudice the tribes against him, and slipped away.

However, he was overtaken, and for some time the two parties were alongside; though a fight between the two was imminent at any time. About this time three trappers from Henry's party, Robinson, Hoback, and Rizner, were met coming out of the mountains, and were persuaded to join the company bound for the Pacific Ocean. By them the route across the Black Hills, to a pass of the Rocky Mountains where the Platte and Yellowstone headed, was said to be better and safer than up the Missouri. At a friendly Aricara village, where the breach between Lisa and Hunt's party was made up, the boats were sold to the Missourian for horses obtained from the Mandans.

The courage, and even almost the hardihood, of Hunt in cutting loose with a little band of mixed people, not half of whom were fighters, and following a course that no one had ever been known to use before—for though Robinson and the two other trappers had a general idea of the country they did not actually know the route—is much to be admired. A number of his hunters said the enterprise was too desperate for them, and threw up their contract, embarrassing

him still more. The Canadians seem to have been entirely true. What was before him has been very well stated by Irving, in one of his best descriptions. It is inserted here as showing more truly than could be indicated now how the interior of the American continent would strike the imagination of an intelligent American. "It was a region almost as vast and trackless as the ocean, and at the time of which we write but little known excepting through the vague accounts of Indian hunters. A part of their route would lie across an immense tract stretching north and south for hundreds of miles along the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and drained by the tributary streams of the Missouri and Mississippi. This region, which resembles one of the immeasurable steppes of Asia, has not inaptly been termed 'the great American desert.' It spreads forth into undulating and treeless plains and desolate sandy wastes, wearisome to the eye for their extent and monotony, and which are supposed by geologists to have been the floor of the ocean countless ages since, when its primeval waves beat against the granite bases of the Rocky Mountains. It is a land where no man permanently abides; for in certain seasons there is no food for either the hunter or his steed. The herbage is parched and withered; the brooks and streams are dried up; the buffalo, the elk and the deer have wandered to distant parts keeping within the range of the expiring verdure, and leaving behind them a vast uninhabited solitude, seamed by

ravines the beds of former torrents, but now only serving to tantalize and increase the thirst of the traveler.

“Occasionally the monotony of this vast wilderness is interrupted by mountainous belts of sand and limestone, broken into confused masses; with precipitous cliffs and yawning ravines looking like the ruins of a world; or is traversed by lofty and barren ridges of rock, almost impassable, like those denominated the Black Hills. Beyond these rise the stern barriers of the Rocky Mountains, the limits, as it were, of the Atlantic world. The rugged defiles and deep valleys of this vast range form sheltering places for ferocious and restless bands of savages, many of them remnants of tribes once the inhabitants of the prairies, but broken up by war and violence, and who carry into their mountain haunts the fierce passions and reckless habits of desperadoes.”

The above now seems as exaggeration, but is of great value as illustrating the sentiments with which men of Hunt's day, with equipments insignificant compared with what men now command, must undertake a journey across this unknown section.

It was not until July 18, 1811, that he was able to move. This was very late, and foreboded the troubles that were in store. It gave them the heat and dust of summer to cross the plains, and the cold and storms of winter to cross the mountains. The scientific gentlemen and travelers—a Mr. Breckenridge, a writer, having come up with Lisa—attached them-



selves to Lisa's company, while Hunt with his company and goods struck across the plains. Their complete failure, or destruction, was freely predicted by the Missouri company. There were eighty-two horses, heavily loaded with Indian goods, traps, and provisions; the partners were mounted, but the Canadians marched on foot. Dorion's wife, a woman whose courage and spirit and general intelligence won respect, and should give her place among the heroines of America, also went on foot, though a horse was furnished for the two children and luggage of the Dorion family. An acquisition considered valuable at the time was Edward Rose, who had lived with the Blackfeet and Crows, though originally a Mississippi River pirate. He claimed to be able to pilot the party through the Crow country, to the passes of the Rocky Mountains. He was detected in an effort to lead off some of the men, or perhaps to betray the whole party as plunder for the Crows; but by careful guard and liberal treatment, nothing came of his plot, whatever it was.

The Black Hills were crossed, and on the 22d of August the Big Horn chain came in sight. The curious explosions mentioned by Lewis and Clark, in perfectly calm and clear weather, were also reported by Hunt in the Black Hills. In the country of the Crow Indians, along the Big Horn Mountains, and the skirts of the Rockies, which they reached early in September, and among whom they had no trouble, they were able to recruit their jaded horses and buy

more, so that there were now 120. Indeed, but for the friendly offices of the Crows the pass across the Rocky Mountains would not have been discovered. Hunt wandered some time attempting to force a way through, but found only impassable barriers; and in this situation received a message by Rose from a Crow chief that he would put him upon the right course, which he and his bands would travel. The white and red men went therefore some time in company; though Hunt felt uneasy, as no such valuable stock of goods had ever yet been in those mountains; and allowed the Indians to get ahead and pass on.

Soon after leaving, or being left by, the Crows, a party of Shoshones and Flatheads were seen, and as these Indians were always friendly the companies traveled some time together and succeeded in getting a good supply of buffalo meat. By the middle of September the party was passing the Wind River Mountains. On that day, from a commanding height, were sighted, far to the west, the mountains which the mountain men said were on the waters of the Columbia: these were the three Tetons; or, as called by Hunt, the Pilot Knobs. It was many days, however, before the party passed their shadow. On the 17th they were on the headwaters of Green River, and finding the valley full of buffaloes stopped two days to hunt and rest the horses. On the 24th a tributary of the Columbia was reached. This was one of the wild upper branches of the Snake, and from its impetuosity, as it was reënforced by another branch, it

was called Mad River— a name which in the course of time, after the voyageurs tried to navigate its rushing waters, acquired a prefix of a profane nature— “ the accursed Mad River.”

The long and toilsome march, the many sufferings, the division of the party into several bands, and the final destruction of all but for the help of the Snake Indians, who did not seem even to think of destroying them in their weakness, but treated them with all the kindness that their own miserable and unhappy situation would allow, cannot be told here. It is described with a touch of romance by Irving, who was always fond of making the most of adventure; but though not so romantic to the travelers themselves, it was sufficiently severe. The Snake River is a frightful stream to try to navigate, and the boats they made were soon destroyed. This was the water that the Shoshones wisely advised Lewis and Clark not to follow. All of October, November, and nearly all December were consumed in wandering on the plains of the Snake, and finally being baffled in attempting to cross the snow-covered ridges of the mountains, appropriately called the Seven Devils, they returned. After returning to the camps of the Shoshones, a guide was finally prevailed upon, for a gun, a pistol, three knives, two horses, and a little of every article in the possession of each man, to pilot them over the Blue Mountains. It is mentioned that in crossing these mountains in the snow, Labonte gave out, and had to be helped on horseback; and the horse being



too weak to carry both the man and his pack, the latter was taken by Hunt himself. This consideration, in a difficult situation, saved to Oregon one of her first settlers. It was an act for which Oregon owes much to Hunt. The beautiful valley of the Grande Ronde was passed, and on the sixth of January, 1812, the last ridges of the Blue Mountains were surmounted, and through their defiles appeared the immense valley of the Columbia, green as spring under the influence of the warm winds from the Pacific. The next day a camp of thirty-four lodges of the Indians called in the narrative *Sciatagoes* and *Tushepawws*—but probably another name for *Cayuses* and *Walla Wallas*—was reached; and on the plain were upward of 2,000 horses grazing. These Indians were found to be quite friendly, and showed more signs of comfort and prosperous condition than any others seen on the west of the Rockies, and fully equal to the best on the east side. Brass kettles and other articles of white men's manufacture told at once that the traders from the Columbia River were not out of reach, or that traffic had penetrated thus far among the tribes. The Columbia River was found to be but two days' travel distant. The winter was open and mild, and the rigors of the mountain were passed.

This was practically the end of Mr. Hunt's difficulties, and although his party had been divided, and not all the men were in yet, and indeed Robinson and his companions, and another party had been left to trap on the Snake, January 31st Hunt and his

section reached the Dalles, or the Indian village Wishram; and on the 15th of February were at Astoria.

On reaching Astoria Hunt found affairs, all excepting the loss of the "Tonquin," in as prosperous a condition as could have been expected. To his great relief, the three small exploring parties under Reed, McClellan, and McKenzie, respectively, who had been detailed from the main party to explore a route through the truly terrific Snake River country, with its mountains and canyons, had been united, and with all their men, eight Canadians, had already reached Astoria. Crooks alone, besides the trappers, had not yet appeared. The three partners and eight Canadians had made their way down the Snake, in spite of starvation and even of thirst, finally reaching a tributary of the Clearwater, as it would seem. Here they found wild horses, as they chose to call them, although probably the property of the Nez Perce Indians; and after reaching "Lewis River"—no doubt the Clearwater—"fell in with a friendly tribe of Indians who freely administered to their necessities." This is one of the many good deeds of the natives that has been passed over hurriedly and forgotten. The Indians were undoubtedly the Nez Perces, or Snakes, one of whose number in this very neighborhood was afterward hanged by a partner of the company for the comparatively slight offense of pilfering.

As to other matters, the schooner "Dolly" had

been launched, and was engaged successfully in trading up and down the Columbia. Parties had been sent to the upper Columbia; preparations were in progress for occupying the Willamette Valley, which was found to be a great and surpassingly fruitful country, and rich in beaver and many other fur-bearing animals. Subsequently a post was established, and the names of McKenzie and Halsey, the one of the swift and beautiful north fork of the Willamette, and the other of the town in Linn County, are reminiscences of the fur traders. Considering the comparatively short time, the people at Astoria had gained also much very useful information. The country was found to be far in advance of their first impressions, the fertility of the soil, and the warmth and equability of the winter climate being especially noted. The wealth of furs was sufficient to warrant Astor's greatest expectations. The natives, with a few exceptions, were found friendly and reliable. The Chinooks, Clatsops, Wahkiacums and Cathlamets, who were simply different bands of the same tribe, were uniformly well disposed. They numbered all together about six or seven hundred fighting men, indicating a total population of some three thousand. Many of the interior tribes, and from the coast both north and south resorted to the river in the salmon season, and from jealousy or irresponsibility were disposed to theft or mischief; but the Chinook chief always assisted in preserving order and good government. The people giving most



trouble were at the Dalles, at the village Wishram, where renegades from all the tribes gathered for trade and gambling, and there was no effective authority. Here the long portage had to be made, and Indians hired to carry the canoes, and the opportunity for stealing was very excellent. A mistake was probably made on the start in attempting to pass this point in too small parties. In the spring of this year, 1813, Robert Stuart, McClellan, and Reed, with five men, taking despatches to Fort Okanogan, and express to Astor, were foolishly drawn into a quarrel with the Wascos and others at the Dalles, killing one of their braves, and having Reed badly injured. Bad blood was excited thus early at the Narrows; although it must be said that the Indians here were a very bad lot of men. They were like the "unspeakable Turk," living largely by piracy and blackmail on the passersby. The upper river Indians, Walla Wallas, Nez Perces, Okanogans and Kalispels, were all found to be friendly, and with but few exceptions, strictly honest. On the return of Stuart's party, below the mouth of the Snake, and probably in the vicinity of the river bearing the name of the Virginian, Crooks and John Day, the lost members of Hunt's winter party, were found; being naked and wholly destitute, having been stripped by the Wascos; though their lives previously had been saved by help from the Shoshones and Walla Wallas. As illustrating the effect on the white man of life with the Indians, Day, who afterward became insane, had an

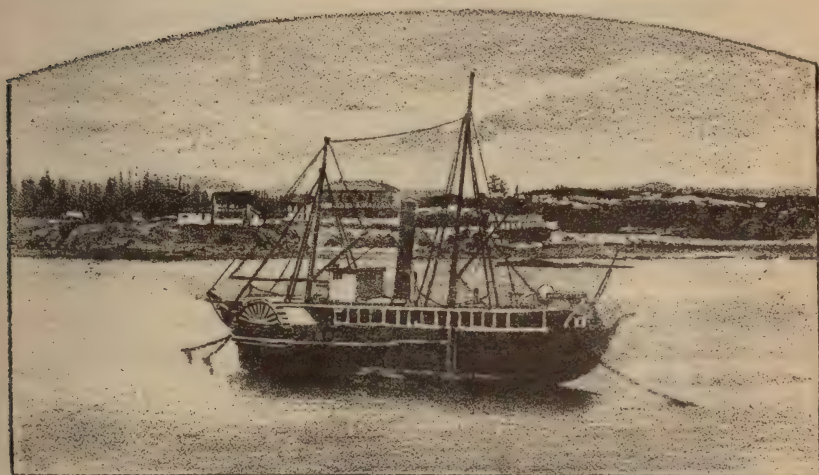
unspeakable dread of these people, being taken with raving at the mention of their name; yet for months he had been taken care of by the Shoshones and Walla Wallas, and but once had been badly treated. Yet the one case where he was robbed and turned loose to die, dyed his entire disposition with fear and hate of the red man.

On May 9th of the same year, 1813, arrived the second ship from New York. This was the "Beaver," Captain Sowle, with another partner, John Clarke, an American, but having served since the age of sixteen with the Northwesters. He was a resolute but overbearing and indiscreet man, as shown by his actions with friendly Indians on the Snake. There was also a re-enforcement of five clerks, fifteen American laborers, and six Canadian voyageurs. The special object of the "Beaver" was to prosecute the Russian trade, arrangements having been concluded to supply the fort at Sitka with provisions in return for furs. Sowle proved a curious antithesis of Thorn; being as cautious, not to say timid, as the unfortunate lieutenant was rash. He all but sailed away from the Columbia after standing off the bar and firing guns for a couple of days, believing that no establishment had been made, or if so it had been captured by the Indians. Clarke resolved, however, to enter the river, anyhow, and start a fort if none were there; but at length signals were heard from the fort, and the "Beaver" entered. With the re-enforcement renewed activity be-



ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE

Reproduced from Winsor's "Narrative and Critical History of America,"  
Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Publishers.



STEAMER "BEAVER"

The first steamship to round Cape Horn.





gan, and parties were sent into the interior. Robert Stuart, McClellan, John Day, Ben Jones, and two Canadians were sent express to New York—having a most adventurous journey, but practically discovering the Platte route across the plains.

The “Beaver,” under Sowle and Hunt, now started on the journey north. Sitka was reached without accident, and Baranoff was found to be well disposed. She arrived at New Archangel, as the station was called, August 19th. As this was the beginning of a trade from the Columbia and Puget Sound to Alaska, which has grown from that day to this, it is worth while that it be emphasized by a quotation from Irving:—“Mr. Hunt found this hyperborean veteran ensconced in a fort which crested the whole of a high rocky promontory. It mounted one hundred guns, large and small, and was impregnable to Indian attack, unaided by artillery. Here the old governor lorded it over sixty Russians who formed the corps of the trading establishment, besides an indefinite number of Indian hunters of the Kodiak tribe, who were continually coming and going, or lounging and loitering about the fort like so many hounds round a sportsman’s hunting quarters. Though a loose liver among his guests the governor was a strict disciplinarian among his men, keeping them in perfect subjection, and having seven on guard day and night. . . .

“Over these coasting captains [The Americans who plied from California to Sitka and the Sand-

wich Islands and China], as we have hinted, the veteran governor exerted some sort of sway, but it was of a peculiar and characteristic kind; it was the tyranny of the table. They were obliged to join him in his 'prosnies,' or carousals, and to drink potations 'pottle deep.' His carousals, too, were not of the most quiet kind, nor were his potations mild as nectar. 'He is continually,' says Mr. Hunt, 'giving entertainments by way of parade, and if you do not drink raw rum, and boiling punch strong as sulphur, he will insult you as soon as he gets drunk, which is very shortly after sitting down to table.' "

Mr. Hunt's description of these carousals and drinking bouts is well sustained by Peter Corney, who visited Sitka in August of 1814, in the schooner "Columbia," who says, "It is the custom of Governor Baranoff to make his visitors drunk when they dine with him. On these occasions he will commence firing guns, which must be answered by the ships, and I have often been obliged to fire upward of fifty guns in a day." Corney, after describing these noisy carousals which were summoned by the booming of cannon from the fort and the ships around the bay, says that the Russians employ great numbers of Kodiak and Unalaska Indians to hunt sea otter and man their ships; and that they hired American ships to take Indians and canoes to California, where the sea otters were very plentiful. He states also, in his rambling accounts, that the slave trade was carried on to a very great extent by the Americans on this



coast. He says, " They buy slaves to the southward and take them to the northward, where they exchange them for sea otter and other furs. If they cannot buy slaves cheap, they make no scruple to take them off by force. A Captain Ayers, of the ship ' Mercury,' took twelve from the Columbia River in this manner, but while bearing down the coast, seven of them seized the whale boat and ran from the ship; only one, however, arrived at the river. This Captain Ayers was so oppressive that three of his men left him, and were kept by Comcomly for twelve months; and they afterward got off in the American ship ' Albatross.' "

The above report is quoted for what it may be worth, though it is not improbable that as there were seamen under American colors, or in American vessels, at that time willing to trade in slaves from Africa, some would do the same on the Pacific Coast, if a market for their human spoil could be found. The value of the quotation, as well as the description of the savage orgies of Baranoff, who degraded both Indians and whites alike, is to show what has appeared on every page of history, that humane form of society, in which man is dignified, his rights respected and his feelings consulted, have ever, without respect to numbers or force, outclassed and superseded the less humane forms. This trade to Russia, tinged, if it truly were so, with carrying serfs back and forth, or perhaps even stained with a slave trade, although under the shelter of the Ameri-

can flag, speedily passed to a company that held both serfdom and slavery as abomination, and to a flag which had then the signal honor in the world to stand for emancipation of all slaves. Where the savage Baranoff once lorded it over serfs and summoned all nations to his drunken feasts, the Stars and Stripes, now washed of the stain of slavery, waves over a people holding such diversions in contempt.

The "Beaver" got away from Baranoff as soon as possible and cruised north for the peltries due for supplies; but then, under counsel of the timid Sowle, steered away for Canton, leaving Hunt at the Sandwich Islands. Sowle reached China, but proved as slow and timid a trader as sailor; refusing first to sell for \$150,000 a cargo that had cost but \$25,000, until the market fell, and he was finally shut up for fear of British cruisers—the war of 1812 with Great Britain now having been in progress on both land and sea, and reaching the Pacific. Hunt, all this while, from January to June 20, of 1813, waited for the arrival of the annual ship, in which he might proceed to Astoria. He waited in vain; she never arrived. The vessel had been despatched, in spite of the war and danger of loss, under Captain Northrup; it was the unfortunate "Lark." She escaped the dangers of war, but was wrecked in a storm on one of the Sandwich Island group. This was in March, but the crew, although finally rescued, were not brought to the port of the native king until late in the year. Late in June the old "Albatross," which had

entered the Columbia in 1809 with Winship's expedition, arrived at Honolulu from Canton, bringing the first news of the war. Waiting no longer for the annual ship Hunt now chartered this vessel, and setting off soon arrived at the Columbia August 20th.

Here he found affairs in the greatest confusion, and the post practically sold to the Northwest Fur Company of Canada. As early as January 16th, of that year, news had been brought overland from Canada by George McTavish, of the Northwesters, that war had been declared against England, and that an expedition under the Northwesters, with the ship "Isaac Todd," was bound for the mouth of the Columbia. This, he said, was accompanied by three British men-of-war, "The Cherub," "Phoebe," and "Raccoon." She left England in March, of 1813, under command of Captain Smith, with Donald McTavish as partner, and with a number of settlers. As the "Beaver" had not returned from the north, according to expectations, and as the spring passed without the annual ship, the determination of McDougal to abandon the post was gradually accepted as the only practicable course, and all hands were now preparing to cross the mountains to Canada. Hunt arriving in August in the "Albatross," not now expected, was astonished and chagrined at this conclusion, and for some time strove manfully to reverse the decision. But the partners were firmly fixed in this mind, and at length Hunt saw that the only course was to save what he might of



the goods, and make arrangements for the Sandwich Islanders to return home—having some twenty-five of these people in his charge. He accordingly sailed for the Marquesas, whither the “ Albatross ” was bound. Here he met Porter, the American commodore, who had been taking British prizes in the Pacific, and learned that the British squadron had left Rio de Janeiro, undoubtedly bound for the Columbia; he applied to Porter for a prize ship, but considered the price—\$25,000—too great, and repairing to the Sandwich Islands found Northrup, the captain of the lost “ Lark.” He then bought a brig, the “ Pedlar,” and with this set out January 22, 1814, hoping to reach Astoria before the British ships arrived, secure the furs and sail with them for the Russian country.

But these arrangements, pushed with utmost energy, proved too late. Already, on the 7th of October, 1813, an overland party of Northwesters, under George McTavish, reached Astoria—a force of seventy-five in all. News of the expedition of the “ Isaac Todd ” was conveyed in a letter from the uncle of McDougal, a principal partner of the Northwesters. The British flag was raised over the camp of McTavish, and McDougal forbid the raising of the American over the fort. Many of the Americans advised treating the British as enemies, and driving them off if they would not surrender. Comecomly was eager to take part in the contest, showing McDougal how his braves might be posted in the deep

woods and along the hill, and pick the British off if they attempted to advance on the fort. But McDougal resolutely refused all these offers, insisting upon treating the invaders as friends, and even furnishing them supplies while waiting for the English squadron, which he had been definitely informed by his uncle "was to take and destroy everything American on the northwest coast." The position of McTavish, indeed, became awkward, and almost ridiculous, his only safety being the connivance of McDougal with his plans. The squadron did not arrive as expected, the Northwesters being obliged to camp nearly two months in front of the post that they could not take by force, and being granted supplies from time to time as the autumn wore away.

At length, on November 30th, a sail appeared. Whether American or British was not known, but the former was feared by McTavish and McDougal, as it was but one; and not three or four as expected. Hasty terms of sale were now concluded, and McTavish prepared to transfer the goods to a safe place above Tongue Point, while McDougal put off for the ship, instructing his men to pass for British or Americans, as the ship might be. It proved to be the "Raccoon," Captain Black, a British man-of-war; but all hands aboard were greatly disgusted upon learning that the post had passed to British hands, and the million dollars' worth of furs, as had been reported, could not be taken as prize. Captain Black, indeed, insisted for a time that an inventory of all

the property taken from the Americans should be given, "with a view to ulterior measures in England, for the recovery of the value from the Northwest company." McDougal was regarded with disfavor; being considered little better than a cheat by the British seamen; regarded as a traitor by those of the Americans who did not prefer the Canadian Company, and denominated a "squaw" by Comcomly. He was, however, admitted as a partner in the Northwesters, and appears to have considered his arrangements as justifiable, his entire sympathy and interest having been from the first with the Canadian Company; and to gain for them so valuable a prize as the fur trade of the Pacific Coast from Americans, and to save the stock of furs from the British sailors whose presence wrung it from the Americans, was only so much more to his credit as a faithful Northwester.

Irving's moral, that the disasters of the Pacific Fur Company came in every case from disregard of Mr. Astor's instructions, and show the necessity of obeying orders, is but a slight explanation of the failure. If wise instructions are given, what force or power is going to see that agents thousands of miles away will be enabled to understand or carry them out? The only thing to insure performance of instructions is the composition of the company, or selection of subordinates, who have the disposition and interest to see that instructions are obeyed. As to McDougal, his disposition was to rely upon some



stronger mind. He was a vain and ambitious but not an independent man. In trouble he sought the advice and aid of those whom he had been taught to rely upon. These were the Northwesters. As soon, moreover, as he became of any importance in the American company, it was easily made his interest to enter the Canadian concern. Without definite intention of betraying his trust, the workings of his mind led him to think the only reasonable course was to capitulate with the Northwesters.

The prime error was, therefore, that of Astor himself. A company composed as his was, remote from headquarters, could not long stay together. Whether his success would have been any greater if he had attempted to compose his enterprise of Americans only is very problematical. The Americans were not then trained for concerted action in large numbers. The worst mistakes of all were made by Thorn and Sowle; Clark caused the worst breach with the natives. Americans have ever been very poor servants, but great as citizens. It was not until they arrived in their citizen capacity that they made a mark in Oregon.

The substantial results of the Astor expedition may be summed as follows:

Making for the Americans the first permanent settlement in Oregon; which was of high value in establishing that Americans desired to give validity to the discovery of the Columbia by Robert Gray, the exploration by Lewis and Clark, and the attempted

settlement by Winship; opening of the land route across America in place of the Canadian water way manner, followed in part by Lewis and Clark; discovering the route by way of the Black Hills, Wind River, Green River, Wind River Mountains, and the three Tetons, together with the impracticability of the route by Snake River; but the route over the Blue Mountains by Grande Ronde, which became the great highway of the immigrations in after years; and finally the partial opening of the route across the plains by the Platte River, which almost completed the "Oregon Trail," and has become the direct railroad line to California and Oregon. All this was accomplished by Hunt and his men.

Finally, it brought to Oregon a number of men who remained permanently in the country, and became the first settlers, and at the critical time cast their influence for the United States rather than Great Britain. These men were: Americans, Alexander Carson and William Cannon; and Canadian, Joseph Gervais, Etienne Lucier, Louis Labonte, and Du Bruil, the particulars of whose settlement will be given later.

The immediate result of the Astor expedition, after its failure, was to bring large recruits to the Canadians, at just the place where his rivals were needing recruits; these were McDougal, the Stuarts, Alexander Ross, Ross Cox, Donald McKenzie, and a number of others, besides a large force of voyageurs. Mr. Keith was shortly placed in charge of Astoria.

The sale of Astoria was at first assumed by the new owners as giving to Great Britain full title to the mouth of the Columbia River, but the treaty of peace expressly provided that all places captured by either party should be restored, and the condition *quo ante* should be resumed. America never suffered this claim to lapse, and although it was urged by the British representatives, when the question was brought to the notice of the department of state, that Astoria was not captured, but sold, it was answered, and quite sufficiently, that private citizens could not alienate national sovereignty. Whatever right America had acquired in Oregon remained unchanged, although possession of the premises and enjoyment of use passed over to the British.

The overt act of restitution of this post by the British in 1818, in accordance with the provision of the treaty, no doubt had some effect in strengthening the basis of our claim to this region.

Names bestowed in Oregon from this expedition, and remaining to the present time as indicia of the American occupancy for the two years, are: Astoria, John Day River, in Clatsop County, and in Middle Oregon; McKenzie's Fork of the Willamette; Alec's Butte, a beautiful hill near the town of North Yamhill, where Alexander Carson made his home, and was finally killed by the Tualatin Indians; Halsey, in Linn County, and Gervais in Marion County—though these latter were bestowed long afterward in commemoration of these early adventurers, by the first



railroad company in Oregon. Mad River, Cauldron Linn, and the Devil's Scuttle Hole, reminiscences of the fearful march through the Snake River country, do not appear to have remained; though the name of the tremendous chain in the Idaho copper district, the Seven Devils, has a sound not unlike that suggested by the maledictions of Hunt's men.

It is a matter of great interest that Mr. Astor left a statement of his views and reasons for the failure of his company. This is given in full as an admirable synopsis of the enterprise, and as an indication of the mind and style of thought of this great merchant whose name and ideas have been so deeply impressed in Oregon history.

Letter from J. J. Astor, of New York, to Hon. John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, United States.

New York, January 4, 1823.

Sir:—I had the honor to receive your letter of the 24 ult. Indisposition has prevented my acknowledging the receipt thereof at an earlier period.

You request information of arrangements made at or about 1814, by the Northwest Company and citizens of the United States, by which that company became possessed of a settlement made at the mouth of the Columbia river by citizens of the United States. The settlement to which you allude, I presume, is Astoria, as I know of no other having been made at or near the mouth of the Columbia river. Several circumstances are alleged as having contributed to the arrangement by which the Northwest Company came into possession of that settlement, but chiefly to the misuse of the confidence which had been placed in Mr. McDougal, who, at the time the arrangement was made, and at the time my agent, Mr. Hunt, Wilson P. Hunt, was absent, acted as sub-agent.

I beg leave briefly to state that having contemplated making an establishment at the mouth of the Columbia river, which should serve as a place of depot, and giving further facilities for conducting a trade across this continent to that river, and from thence on the range of the Northwest Coast, etc., to Canton, in China, and from thence to the United States, arrangements were accordingly made in 1810 for a party of men to cross the continent for the

Columbia river. At the same time I fitted out the ship *Tonquin*, carrying twenty guns and sixty men, commanded by the late Captain Thorn, lieutenant in the U. S. navy. The ship sailed in September, 1810, having on board the means of making an establishment at Columbia, where she arrived on the 22nd March, 1811. They landed, found the natives friendly, built a fort, erected a house, store, etc. This being accomplished Captain Thorn left thirty men in possession of the place, to await the party who were to make the voyage overland; these also, happily, arrived, although not until several months later. On or about the first of June, Captain Thorn left the Columbia river, with a view to make some trade on the coast, and then return to the river; but, unfortunately, Thorn never returned. At about two hundred miles north of Columbia, he put in a bay to trade with the natives. Not attending to the precautions necessary, as he had been instructed to do, to guard against an attack, he suffered a whole tribe of Indians to come on board and about his ship. An attack was made; he was overpowered, fire was communicated to the magazine, the ship was blown up, and every soul on board or near her perished. [Some escaped.]

In 1811 I fitted out the ship *Beaver*, carrying twenty guns, with duplicate cargo to the ship *Tonquin*, and sixty or seventy men. The captain (Sowle) was directed to sail for the Columbia river, and in search of the men who were sent across the continent, as also of the *Tonquin*. The *Beaver* sailed from this in October, 1811, arrived at Columbia the May following, found the establishment, and landed such men, goods, provisions, etc., as the establishment was in need of. My instructions to the captain were, that after supplying the establishment, he should proceed to Chatka (Sitka), a Russian settlement, for the purpose of trade, and then return to Columbia, take what furs we had, and proceed to Canton and proceed to New York. He accordingly left Columbia (and most unfortunately, Mr. Hunt, of Trenton, New Jersey, my chief agent, left the river with him), sailed as directed for the Russian settlement and effected their object; but instead of following instructions to sail for Columbia, he sailed direct for Canton, leaving Mr. Hunt at one of the Sandwich islands, to await the arrival of another ship, which I had promised from this in 1812. The ship *Beaver* arrived at Canton, and received there the news of the war. I had sent orders to the captain to return to Astoria; but he was fearful of being captured, and remained safely at Canton until the war was over, when he came home. In consequence of the war I found it inconvenient to send a ship in 1812, but I did send one, the *Lark*, early in 1813,

with directions to the captain to sail for the Columbia river, and stop at the Sandwich islands for information. Being within a few days' sail of those islands, the ship, in a squall of wind, was upset, and finally drifted on the beach of one of the islands, a wreck—ship and cargo totally lost. Here was met Mr. Hunt, who, after all the information he received, and my great desire to protect the establishment at Columbia river, procured an American vessel, took some provisions, and arrived in Columbia river. He there learned that Mr. McDougal had transferred all my property to the Northwest Company, who were in possession of it by a sale, as he called it, for the sum of about fifty-eight thousand dollars, of which he retained fourteen thousand dollars, for wages said to be due to some of the men. From the price obtained for the goods, etc., and he himself having become interested in the purchase, and made a partner in the Northwest Company, some idea may be formed of this man's correctness of dealings. It will be seen by the agreement (that of which I transmit a copy) and the inventory, that he sold to the Northwest Company eighteen thousand one hundred and seventy and a quarter pounds of beaver at two dollars, which was at that time selling at five and six dollars in Canton; nine hundred and seven otter skins at fifty cents, or half a dollar, which were selling at Canton at five to six dollars per skin.

I estimated the whole property to be worth nearer two hundred thousand dollars than forty thousand dollars, about the sum I received in bills on Montreal. Previous to the transaction of Mr. McDougal we had already established trading posts in the interior and were in contact with the Northwest Company. It is now to be seen what means have been used by them to counteract my plan. It is well known that, as soon as the Northwest Company had information of my intention and plan for conducting my commercial operations, they despatched a party of men from the interior, with a view to arrive before my people at Columbia. These men were obliged to return without effecting their object. In the mean time representation was made to their government as to the probable effect of my operations on their interest, and requesting to interfere on their behalf. This being in time of peace the government did not deem it advisable to do so. So soon, however, as war was declared, these representations were renewed, aid was asked from their government, and it was granted. The *Phoebe*, frigate, and sloops of war *Raccoon* and *Porcupine* [Cherub] were sent from England with orders to proceed to the Columbia river and destroy my property. They sailed from England early in January, 1813. Ar-



iving at Rio Janeiro Admiral Dickson ordered the Phoebe frigate, with one of the sloops, to pursue Captain Porter in the frigate Essex; and the sloop of war Raccoon to the Columbia. She arrived there, took possession in the name of the king, and changed the name of the place from Astoria to Fort George. Previous to this the Northwest Company had despatched another, or second, party of men to the Columbia. They arrived there in the absence of Mr. Hunt; McDougal gave them support and protection, and they commenced, after some time, to negotiate with this gentleman.

The reason assigned by him for his conduct will be seen by an extract of a letter said to have been sent by a Mr. Shaw of the Northwest Company, and of which I send you a copy. The plan by me adopted was such as must have materially affected the interest of the Northwest Company and Hudson's Bay Companies, and it was easy to be foreseen that they would employ every means to counteract my operations, and which, as my impression, I stated to the executive of your department as early as February, 1813, as will be seen by a copy of the sketch of a letter which I wrote to the secretary of state, and to which no reply was given. On repeated application, some time after, aid was promised me, but I believe the situation of our country rendered it inconvenient to give it. You will observe that the name of the Pacific Fur Company is made use of at the commencement of the arrangements for this undertaking. I preferred to have it appear as the business of a company rather than that of an individual; and several of the gentlemen engaged—Mr. Hunt, Mr. Crooks, Mr. McKay, McDougal, Stuart, etc.—were in effect to be interested as partners in the undertaking, so far as respected the profit that might arise; but the means were furnished by me, and the property was solely mine, and I sustained the loss, which though considerable I do not regret; because, had it not been for the unfortunate circumstance just stated, I should have been, as I believe, most richly rewarded; as it will be seen that the difference in the price of beaver skin and otter skin alone, say what I received and the value of them at Canton at that time, is about sixty thousand dollars. The copy of the agreement, inventory, and extract of Shaw's letter, you will please return to me.

I am, sir, etc.,

JOHN JACOB ASTOR.



## CHAPTER XI

### OREGON UNDER THE CANADIAN COMPANY





**O**REGON now passed for thirty years under the commercial control of the British fur companies; twenty years of this time the control was all but absolute, and for the whole period all the employees of the companies, and practically all of the natives, were the subjects of their civil and military authority. In order to understand the success of the British in Oregon, and see from what source was drawn the energy that thus early organized and subdued a territory comprising what composes now the States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and parts of Montana and Wyoming; and all of British Columbia, territorially greater than any of the European states except Russia; with annual expeditions to California, Alaska, and the Sandwich Islands; we shall be assisted by a short résumé of the two British companies that were the successors of the Pacific Fur Company of John Jacob Astor.

These two companies were the Hudson's Bay Company, having its headquarters in America at York Factory, on Hudson's Bay; and the Northwest Fur Company, having its seat at Montreal, Canada, and its principal western rendezvous at Mackinaw, and at Fort William, a point on Lake Superior. It was the Northwest Company that was the immediate rival of Astor, and wrested Astoria, and the fur trade of the Pacific, from him; but within ten years the two British concerns were united, and the British rule in Oregon has popularly been known as that of the Hud-

son's Bay Company. It will be seen that it was no trifling combination against which the American found himself pitted; having not only a vast body of commercial interest, but the traditions, training, confidence, and personal loyalty of a large force of men.

The Hudson's Bay Company was much the older concern; its charter was granted by King Charles II in 1670. This was in consequence of the representations of a French navigator who saw the value to be derived from North American furs, the first savage product of any northern land, and succeeded in interesting Prince Rupert. To the prince and associates was granted as a royal monopoly sole use and ownership under the Crown, of Hudson's Bay, all its waters, lands, tributaries, and accompaniments, though with boundaries wholly indefinite. Here they had the essential rights of government, using the country to their own sole profit; being authorized to provide forts, arms, armies, and defenses, and on their own account to make war on any people not Christian, and to defend by force any of their privileges thus granted. It had from the first all the characteristics of a great monopoly, and as Bancroft well says these included more or less of injustice: "All great monopolies are unjust and injurious; men combine and monopolize for no other purpose than to exclude others having equal rights." Three forts were built at first—Fort Rupert, one on the Mononsis, and one on St. Anne's River.

The policy, which could be pursued under the mo-



nopoly, was to build but a few tolerably strong posts, make a few or no discoveries, leave the country to the natives, exclude all rivals, and thus, by offer of fair prices in trinkets that cost but little, induce the Indians immediately surrounding the forts to buy, or plunder of interior tribes, and deliver the peltries themselves at the forts. This policy worked admirably so long as intruders could be kept out, profits on the original stock of £10,500 sterling being fifty per cent. per annum. But it was not easy to keep out intruders. The very Frenchman who had suggested the organization of the company to Prince Rupert, returned to France, represented the plunder to be obtained from the British forts on Hudson's Bay, and a company was organized in Canada in 1681 whose object was to drive out the English; they built Fort Bourbon, at the mouth of the River St. Therese, but sold it soon to the English. In 1685, however, D'Iberville, the French captain, moved north, and in that year, and twice again, destroyed the Hudson's Bay forts; which, however, were rebuilt, and in spite of the losses entailed, there were still enormous dividends on Hudson's Bay Company stock. In 1697 Fort Nelson was captured by the French. By the treaty of Ryswick of that year British possessions were restored, but still French possession of all Canada, including Hudson's Bay, was recognized; but the Hudson's Bay Company still clung to its charter, and did not yield its territory; expeditions were sent by the French from Canada in

1704, but in the treaty of 1713 France was compelled to recognize British ownership of the northern quarter. By the treaty of 1763, at Paris, closing the French and Indian War, all Canada went to England, and the fear of French intrusion was at an end. The fur company then settled into its most conservative ways, forbidding exploration, development, or the intrusion of strangers of any kind, and even reporting the country far wilder and more inhospitable in reality than it was. Its business was transacted under forms of secrecy, and was surrounded with mystery; its agents were not allowed to reveal what they knew, or were themselves purposely misled. The object was, as at the first, to keep the natives in a simple unsophisticated condition, to value trinkets which cost little as of high value, and to bring the furs to the factories on the bay, and thus minimize the expense of maintenance, and obviate entirely the trouble and cost of transporting the furs from the interior to the factories on the coast. Profits all the while were so great that stock was increased, in order to keep dividends within decent bounds. It was trebled in 1690, and still gave dividends of 25 per cent.; it was again trebled in 1720, or made £94,500 sterling, and yet yielded 70 per cent. per annum dividends. In 1800 it was again trebled, two of the three parts added being water, the capital, with additions being now £378,000 sterling, and dividends still stood bravely up from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent. A maximum of profits to a minimum

of expenses was the motto. The stock holders needed only to sit back quietly and draw their dividends, while they could always find agents who would for reasonable pay, and certain tenure, perform the work; yet their pay to the common laborers was insignificant. With their inaction the British Government and people, who desired to see the territory explored in order to determine the question of the Northwest Passage, became much dissatisfied, and investigations were ordered, many disparaging reports were published, and finally Hearne was despatched to explore the Coppermine River; but his reports were not made public for twenty years. Under their charter the Hudson's Bay people sat entirely secure, and desired only that the *status quo* of savagery in North America should never be altered.

But this could not be. Although Canada had become securely English, the Gallic restlessness and love of adventure were still there. These were reënforced and headed by another race of much the same composition; these were Scotchmen, largely from the Highlands. They came soon after the French and Indian War was over, seeking enterprises of a profitable nature, and saw a great opening in taking up the fur trade and extending it on the great lakes. In 1766 they went out to Mackinaw, which commanded the trade of three great lakes—Huron, Michigan and Superior—their resolution in pursuit of profits was to go after the furs into the Indian country, and as they could not enter the sacred precincts of the



Hudson's Bay Company, to establish a line of posts along the region back of Hudson's Bay, and divert the furs from York Factory toward the great lakes, and then carry them speedily down to Montreal, their emporium. Within a dozen years they had spread their operations over the Athabasca and Saskatchewan country, as well as the great lakes, and used every means to attract, or even entice, the Indians to their posts. One of these allurements was liquors, which were given freely to the natives, and their own men. But this method, although at first stimulating trade, soon brought about such demoralization that it was prostrated; the natives would not trap, but gambled and stole, and at length fought and embroiled one another; and to cap the climax, an epidemic of small-pox, that was of the most virulent type, so decimated and demoralized the tribes that the traders dared not enter the country.

Whereupon the independent fur traders of Montreal, headed by Simon McTavish, the Frobishers, Fraser, and others, decided to form a combination which should avoid the ruinous competition and demoralization, and organized the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal. Pond and Pangman, Gregory and McLeod, and Alexander Mackenzie, who had a post at Detroit, were subsequently induced, or forced to join the combination, and by 1787 they were ready for business. Elements of division appeared, and in 1790 reorganization was required, a part forming another company, but all were united in 1805. A report

made in 1798 states that the company employed fifty clerks, 35 guides, and 2,000 men. Expenses per annum were as much as \$400,000; but gross returns nearly twice as much. The amount paid the men averaged not over \$200 per year, each.

The Northwesters were the people with whom Astor had to contend. They had been in the business for a generation, knew each other perfectly, had worked and fought together and against one another, and understood perfectly all the twists and turns of their business. It is not surprising that Astor might have thought that he could make a business arrangement with them on the Columbia as well as buy their goods on the St. Lawrence; but it is perfectly evident why they chose to treat him as an enemy rather than as a friend. The reason was this: They were as yet not a governmental, but a commercial monopoly. They had no way of controlling their trade except by dint of greater activity, better organization, greater understanding of their business, and harder work. They had these qualities, but they foresaw only too clearly that with no other guarantees, the fur trade would soon reach the same pitch of demoralization as that from which it had been rescued just before their union. Their whole policy then must be not to make connections with competing companies, and encourage them to enter the country and divide profits; but oust them from the first. Their policy therefore was to totally reject and drive off the Americans, who were from the very form of

their government and institutions, disinclined and incapable of forming a true monopoly. The proposition of Astor only hastened their efforts to undertake the occupation of the Columbia River Valley, which had been contemplated ever since Mackenzie's journey across the Rocky Mountains, when he passed through the valley of the Fraser, supposing it to be an upper branch of the Columbia.

Their policy and purpose was not a simple combination, which might be a commercial monopoly, but to force their company up to the point of becoming a true government monopoly. The occupation of the Columbia Valley and defeat of Astor gave them an immense advantage here. The American peril was averted, the Columbia River and Oregon, which the British considered as rightfully theirs from the discoveries of Meares and Vancouver, had dropped into their possession as an actual fact, together with a large force of men of their own traditions and nationality, and they were left to complete their great labor. This was to force a union with the Hudson's Bay Company, by which they could share their charter, and thus become a true governmental monopoly. Under this character they could eject all intruders; they could employ men, and at the end of their term of service could take them out of the country. They could establish military posts, arm their employees, assume control of the natives, or if they refused obedience could levy war upon refractory tribes. They could repel by force any others,



subjects of the Crown or not, who trespassed upon their privileges—providing, of course, that the trespassers were not too strong. Lawfully, however, they could defend their privileges, and call upon the sovereign for assistance. They considered union with the Hudson's Bay Company as the only guarantee of the permanency of the monopoly that they had proposed. This is the logical end of monopoly—government sanction. Commercial combinations, however great, are unstable until guaranteed by government. Monopoly invariably seeks this protection at the last. Equality of advantages is the natural status; inequality cannot stand except as supported by positive authority. Monopolists always become monarchists of some form; hence the Northwesters most naturally and reasonably from the point of view of their intentions and projects refused utterly any alliance with Americans, but set about with all energy to force an alliance with a British monopoly having all the monarchical features that could be impressed upon it by a sovereign of the Stuart line, and over a century old.

But before noticing in detail the results of their bold scheme, and its effects upon Oregon, we must follow the work of the Northwesters after getting possession of Astoria, see how they succeeded with the Indians, what establishments they maintained or erected, and particularly, since history consists of the actions of men, give an account of the individuals who thus laid out the commercial beginnings

of Oregon. The occupation of the Northwest Fur Company, by its Oregon agents, lasted ten years.

The men belonging to this period form a company now almost forgotten, but they were a hardy and brave band, and although not serving the American interest, had an honorable share in the sum of endeavor that made up Oregon. There was no one striking character, and they did not work to any very definite point, except to carry on their affairs from day to day and year to year. They were holding the country for their company, or clan, as these men of highland blood regarded the Canadian establishment, while the main interest of that body, and its most earnest efforts, were in crowding the old Hudson's Bay people to the wall, and forcing a surrender to itself of their charter rights.

These earliest Oregonians, who took the leading part, were Donald McTavish, Duncan McDougal, Alexander Ross, Ross Cox, George McTavish, James Keith, Peter Corney, Donald McKenzie, Thomas McKay, and James Birnie. Still others, Stuart, Montier, Laroche, Bethune, and McDonald, might also be remembered, and to run over their names suggests enough of romance and history to warrant the expectation that some time, some or all of these names will live again in literature. That they were a high-minded and even educated class of young men will appear when we notice that four of these were able to, and did, write books of life in the northwest, some of which have been reprinted within

recent years. It was these book writers, who quoted Virgil and read the *Spectator*, that so excited the derision of Captain Thorn; yet their efforts to reduce to literary expression the life and experiences of this newest part of the world, at its first moments of consciousness, mark them as superior to the ordinary adventurer, and their literary taste has lived in Oregon down to the present time. The book writers were Gabriel Franchere, Alexander Ross, Ross Cox, Peter Corney. Franchere is best known, but Alexander Ross has some descriptions, especially of Indian life, superior to Franchere.

After Astoria surrendered, Captain Black, cooling down from his vexation, sailed out of the Columbia, but his ship "Raccoon" was roughly handled on the bar of the river, and was so much injured by striking on the sand that she was scarcely able to make port in California. The "Pedlar" also departed taking away Hunt, Halsey, Farnham, Seton, and a number of other Americans. But April 17th the "Isaac Todd" appeared, and stood up the river as far as a point opposite Astoria, anchoring at what is now Knappton, in a deep arm of the river, known for some time after as Todd's Bay. On the "Todd," thirteen months from England, arrived the chief partner, who was to organize the department of the Columbia, Donald McTavish; John McDonald, and three clerks. Dr. Swan, the first physician, and Jane Barnes, the first white woman in Oregon, also came on the "Todd." Miss Barnes had been a barmaid



in England, and consented to accompany one of the partners, but this was not well regarded by the people at Astoria, and it was in fact against the policy of the company, which was that the partners should marry native women. Jane Barnes, moreover, did not very much like Astoria, and sailed away with the "Todd," in course of time, to Canton, and completed her adventure by marrying an East India gentleman.

Donald McTavish at once took charge of the post, and showed himself to be a man of energy and good judgment. It is said that for the murder of one of the men, called Judge, who had become half-witted from exposure on the journey to Astoria, and was employed at the charcoal pit, McTavish offered a reward to the natives, and secured the guilty man, who, by the consent of the chiefs, was executed. But the new governor's life was cut short within but a few days. Corney, describing the arrival of the "Todd" and the death of McTavish, says that this vessel "arrived off the Columbia River in April, 1814, got over the bar in safety, and anchored in Baker's Bay. The 'Todd' went up the river, and moored opposite the fort above Village Point [Chinook]; and all the entreaties of McTavish could not prevail on Captain Smith [of the 'Todd'] to bring the ship across; his excuse was want of water in the channel, where there is three and a half fathom at high tide. The consequences were fatal, for on Sunday, the 22d of May, as Mr. McTavish was crossing the river in the ves-

sel's long boat, under charge of Captain Smith's nephew, when they got about mid channel, they were upset by a sudden squall, filled, and sank immediately. Mr. McTavish, Mr. Henry, and four others, found a watery grave, and an American carpenter, named Joseph Little, alone saved himself with an oar. He drifted up the river [on flood tide], and got on the stump of a tree, whence he was taken by an Indian canoe to the fort, where he communicated the sad fate of the governor and party."

According to Corney these early days at Astoria were darkened more than once by disaster or disorder. He arrived in the second vessel sent out to the Columbia River. This was the schooner "Columbia," of 185 tons, and 25 men; nine ten-pounders, and a patent boarding defense, which, however, proved of no use and was finally sold to Baranoff. A mutiny on board ship compelled this vessel to arrive with a part of the crew in irons. The "most villainous design" of the mutineers was divulged by one of their number, Thomas Smoke. The guilty parties were John Happy, John Carpenter, John Peterson, and John Decrutz—names of unlimited suggestion to the story writer. "Their horried purpose" was to rise in the middle watch, throw the officer, Corney, overboard, kill the captain and other officers, and then under Smoke to sail with the schooner for the Spanish main; but Smoke weakened, and the quartette of Johns reached the Columbia in irons. Corney also tells of another murder at

the charcoal pit. This was of the blacksmith and two men. The murderers were Shoshones, of a party one of whom had some time before been kicked from the fort by the Americans for stealing. He took his revenge by gathering a number of Indians about the pit, and in an unguarded moment of the whites seizing axes and barbarously killing and mutilating the bodies of the three. By means of presents and the aid of Comcomly two of the Shoshones were seized, and shot; their bodies were exposed some days at the entrance of the fort, but finally given up to their friends.

Corney tells also of a night adventure, in the fall of 1817, across the woods and hills to the village of the Clatsops on the Necanicum, to bring back this same mutineer, John Carpenter, who behaved well for a time, but finally deserted, and was found with the Indians. It was unsafe as well as impolitic to allow such proceedings, and with a party Corney went to the camp, arrested the man, although the Indians were disposed to fight, and brought him in irons to Astoria, and then shipped him out of the country. Not long after this a desperado named Jacobs led off a party of eighteen Kanakas for California; but they were recovered. All these incidents show that the organization of this company was military, and rather severe; the men were practically owned by the company for the term for which they had engaged, and had no option of continuance. Corney, with McDougal, was engaged as first officer



in coasting expeditions to California and Sitka, and to the Sandwich Islands and Canton.

Anything like settlement of the country, or allowing free residence, was not at all contemplated, but on the other hand all this was guarded against most strictly. No men were allowed within the territory except as servants of the company, and upon expiration of their term of service they were to be returned to their own homes. However, according to Corney, the company astutely managed that the term of service should never expire, so long as the men were capable of service. Once every year they assembled at Astoria to get their pay. After this was given, the shops were thrown open, a little grog was distributed to each man, and general indulgence, treating, conviviality, and extension of courtesies to comrades and relatives, to wives and sweethearts, and Indian relatives of wives and sweethearts, ensued, with the result that the company desired. The servants, at the end of the celebration of their year's toil usually found themselves in debt to the company, having drank up more than their wages in a few days, and their only way out of debt—and debt was punishable in those days—was to take service over again. To quote Corney exactly:—"When they arrive in the fall the boatmen encamp outside the fort; they are each served out with half a pint of rum and their clothing, and the orders are issued that those who do not get drunk must go to the woods and cut timber. The liquor shop is then opened, and kept by one of

the clerks; a scene of drunkenness and all manner of vice follows. A frolic of this kind will cost them a year's pay and upward; they generally agree for two years, at the end of which time they find themselves in debt, are obliged therefore to agree for two years longer, and in this manner are kept in the service until they are gray-headed."

We cannot greatly admire the methods which made the entire service of faithful employees amount to nothing but a few days of turbulent revelry, and turned their hard earnings back in a twinkling to the chests of the employers; and spread demoralization also among the native peoples. We welcome the movement of time which brought methods that gave an honest equivalent for service.

In the spring of 1813 a company, which even then was called the brigade, although of less than 100 men, set out for the upper country, Forts Okanogan, Spokane, and Kamloops being the only permanent stations as yet east of the Cascades. The Indians at the Dalles were now reckoned as hostiles, and when the brigade approached made the usual preparations to harass and rob, and perhaps stop them altogether. The Canadians, however, tried a new plan, which worked; this was, when the warriors were seen as usual starting up the river for the narrows, to suddenly swoop down on the village, left unprotected, and capture a dozen or two of the women and old men, and hold them as hostages. By this move the thieves were nonplussed, and the

troublesome place was passed without accident or detention.

After reaching Fort Okanogan, which as it will be remembered had been founded the first year by Stuart on the peninsula, where the Okanogan sweeping from Osooya's and Okanogan Lake, far to the north, joins the Columbia, here coming nearly from the east, and where Ross had spent the winter with the Indians, Ross and McKay stopped, while the others went on to Spokane. The companion of Ross was Thomas McKay, the son of the McKay, partner in the Pacific Fur Company and companion of Alexander Mackenzie, who was lost in the destruction of the "Tonquin." Thomas was a young man of unflinching courage, a dead shot, and destined to become a leading character under the Hudson's Bay Company, and one of the chief supporters of the young Republic of Oregon when it was finally organized by the Americans. "Tom" McKay was the idol of the half castes, his mother being from the Red River country, and he himself being described as of darker complexion than the most of Indians, though his father was white. His sons, Alexander, William, and Donald, whose mother was a native woman of the Chinook tribe, became well educated and influential men in Oregon, and rendered invaluable services during Indian troubles.

Soon after reaching Okanogan, Ross and McKay had an adventure with the Indians which shows how the white traders' spirit must rise to meet the emer-



gency, and also the innate nobility of the Indian, when fairly brought to the test. They wanted some horses, and Ross having had from the first a great desire to see eastern Washington, and the country toward the Cascades, took McKay and three Canadians and went over into the Yakima country. This was one of the largest and most beautiful valleys of the Pacific slope, and a paradise for the Indians. Here was grass on hills and plains boundless as the ocean, and it was a sort of neutral ground, being entirely free from incursions of the Snakes or Blackfeet, and many tribes of the northwest loved to resort thither in the early summer, in a friendly way, to trade and play games, run horses, and celebrate their summer festivals.

Nearing the camp of the Indians, where it is said that as many as six thousand, of nearly all the tribes, were collected, the white men were approached by friendly Indians who said that it would be death to enter such a camp. But Ross, having the Scotchman's determination and daring, and never backing out of an undertaking, decided to go ahead; knowing also that if he once turned his back on the Indians he might as well leave the country forever. On reaching the camp they were astonished at the numbers, the valley seeming alive with the natives and the plains teeming with bands of horses. All was excitement also, and the little party of whites scarcely attracted notice. Some of the Indians, however, consented to stop their part in the exercises and

trade for horses; but their spirit was soon seen to be mischievous. As soon as a horse was brought out and bought by the whites it was carried off again amid the jeers of the Indians. Pretending not to notice this, and as if the animal would be restored at the proper time, Ross continued his purchases, until he had all he wished. Food was now refused, and for two or three days the whites were in need while the natives sported in abundance. Insults were soon added, the spirit of mischief seeming to rise to malignity, and a savage exultation at having whites among them too feeble to resent ill-treatment or command respect. Ross restrained his men, and believed that self-command would restore kindliness; but a chief finding that insults and refusal of food would not bring out the blow that they wished, on the third day, coolly advanced and took away the knife of one of the Canadians. The latter at once sprang up for a desperate fight, and the Indian was ready. Ross saw that it would soon be all over, but his courage and acumen rose to the occasion. Commanding his man to be quiet, he drew a knife from his sheath, which had a much finer handle, and with perfect courtesy offered it to the Indian, saying, "Take this, friend; this is a chief's knife." This unexpected turn instantly touched the Indian's pride. He was pleased, repeating, "See, this is a chief's knife!" and the thought evidently came to his mind that he must not commit an act unworthy a chief, as it would be to fight a disarmed man. His admiration for the

“big heart” of the captain of the little band also rose, and his manner changed at once. Taking advantage of the moment Ross then asked what he should tell his father at the fort when he said that he had paid for the horses, but Yaktana, the chief, would not deliver them; and the horses were found and delivered. The party then immediately left, adding wings to their flight after they had gotten well out of view; but with the accident that McKay was thrown from his horse, suffering a dislocation of his hip, from which he went lame ever after. The adventure was hare-brained and unnecessary, as Indians in great numbers are like all wild things; all fear is gone, and none of the chiefs can restrain their men. The savage delight in torment, especially of anyone that they consider usually their superior, comes then to the surface. It was only the greatest self-command and native shrewdness that enabled Ross to touch the fine chivalry of the Indian—who despises cowardice, and if brought to understand it will not commit an act of cowardice himself.

In the summer of the same year occurred an adventure of even greater import on the Columbia River. Keith, McTavish, Stuart, McDonald, McKay, and McKenzie, and others were concerned here, and it was brought out without any occasion. The real reason undoubtedly was that the Indians had seen the whites coming into their country and taking the furs, burning the wood, breathing the air, drinking the water, and carrying on trade without special per-



mission. It was the belief of the natives that all these things belonged to themselves and should not be alienated without a valuable consideration. They therefore drew the conclusion that they had the right, if the whites took these without permission, to take what they wanted from the whites without permission. What the whites gave as presents they accepted as a tribute; and if the present was not to their liking, they thought they had a right to more. The whites, of course, had an entirely different view of the matter, having been taught that wild things were common property, and that only individual title, or cultivation, gave the right to refuse use. They gave presents not as pay but as good-will; they held that theft of their goods was a crime, and one at least of the white captains, Clarke, had assumed to punish stealing by death. Neither the whites nor the Indians understood the fundamental difference in their conceptions of property, the latter having the tribal idea, and not knowing the individual idea; and the whites considering nothing property except that secured by title; but holding theft of individual property, according to English law, a crime next to murder.

A clash along these lines of half-unconscious conceptions, occurred to the whites as they were slowly poling their way up the Columbia, at a broad place some distance below the mouth of the Snake. The water was shallow, and a band of Indians came out from the shore, stopping the first bateau, and asking

a present. Tobacco was given, and they then asked the same of the next bateau as it arrived; more wading in from the shore. Tobacco was again given. So it continued to the other bateaux; but with each the Indians augmenting in numbers, and seeming surly and dissatisfied. Congregating still around the boats some began handling articles, and took hold of the boats, rocking them, and acting in a threatening way, until a fight was brought on. Two of the Indians were killed, and the rest were dispersed; but the whites dared not proceed, and stopping on an island remained some days. The Indians were seen gathering, as time passed, in great numbers along the shore, and it was at length clear that they did not intend letting the trappers go without trouble. It was at length decided by the whites, unwise as it was to begin a policy of war, and unfit as they were to carry it on, that they could not be beleaguered on the island, and forming in order, they moved to the north shore, and were soon confronted by a large band of mounted and painted Indians, of many tribes, through whom it seemed that there could be no passage without fighting. The numbers were increasing, when at that moment there came riding down the Indian line a young warrior, who was all animation and began most earnestly haranguing the assembled and fast increasing force of braves. His voice was so penetrating as to be clearly heard by the whites, and was rendered by their interpreter. It is a fine piece of Indian eloquence, which shows the manner in

which the chiefs got and held their influence; and the motives that were working among the more intelligent. He was against fighting the white men, and said:

“ My countrymen, what is this that you would do? But three winters ago we were a miserable people at the mercy of our enemies. Our warriors were killed, our lodges burned, our wives enslaved. Now we are fed and clothed; now we have horses by the thousands, and sweet sleep at night. Now our hearts are strong within us. What brought the change? The white man. For our horses and furs he gave us hatchets and guns, and taught us how to use them. These make our security for us; these make us a nation. Then why kill the white man? You would rob him; but did he ever rob you? Know you not that he is strong? That if you harm him he will come in force and cut you off, or else will say that you are bad men and will not come at all; then you shall be left to the mercy of your foes. Take what they offer for your dead; and be it known to you if there is to be fighting, I will fight on their side.”

This abstract gives the course of the argument; that the whites were a benefit. The chief who made this address was a young warrior of the Walla Walla, and was known as the Morning Star. He already boasted many scalps of his enemies, especially the Snakes, from an expedition against whom he had just returned with nineteen of these ghastly



trophies. The sentiment of the Indians was at once turned; they agreed to accept the indemnity offered for the two Indians that had been killed, and promised the whites unmolested navigation.

In 1816 we find James Keith in command at Astoria; George McTavish was trading by the schooner "Albany" to California; Donald McKenzie was rising to be one of the most energetic and capable men of the company in Oregon. He led a band up the Columbia in the spring, and determined to put an end to the constant annoyances and hostilities at the Dalles. This was done without violence. Making an appointment with a chief he constituted him the guardian of the passage of the river, explaining the danger to all parties of a state of hostility. The chief accepted the trust, and so faithfully carried out his promise that although in course of time a boat was stranded and exposed for some days in a most tempting manner, not an article was taken. The same year troubles arose in the Willamette Valley. It was from the familiar question of the Indians, whether the whites would pay for the privilege of hunting on their lands. The natives here also had the idea that wild animals were as much their own in their country as domestic stock in ours; and that hunting and trapping was a privilege to be paid for. The whites, however, gave no attention to their question, and when their progress was opposed killed a chief. A great party of Indians was then assembled at the Falls to stop them. Finally an indemnity was settled

upon, and the privilege of hunting and trapping was granted.

The next year a brigade of eighty-six men left for the upper country. McKenzie determined to occupy the Snake River country, which was rich in furs, but the Snake Indians were becoming disaffected. However, he took eight men and successfully trapped in the Shoshone country. He decided, and indeed had directions, from the company in Canada, to build a fort near the confluence of the Snake and Columbia rivers. He selected a point somewhat above the mouth of the Walla Walla River. This provided a convenient halting place to parties on the way to Forts Okanogan, Spokane, and Kamloops, on the main Columbia; to the Clearwater and Nez Perce country to the east; and to the Grande Ronde and Snake River country southeast. Although earnest in his design he was not supported by the partners at Astoria, some of whom were nearly ready to abandon the Northwest Coast altogether; let alone building new forts. But the company was not of this mind, and the next year, 1818, came positive orders to the commandant of Astoria to furnish him men and means to build the fort. This was accordingly done. With one hundred men McKenzie went up the river and selected the site at what is now Wallula, on the bank of the Columbia. This is on the borders of an immense sage brush plain, with the line of the Blue Mountains nearly fifty miles off, dimly closing the prospect to the south and east. To the north, across

the broad and powerful river, here more than a mile wide, is the unlimited plain. There was not anywhere a green tree in sight, but the pebbly shore was more or less supplied with drift wood. To the west the river entered the pass between the high doors of the Wallula bluffs, green with grass only in the late winter or early spring, but for the rest of the year dun or gray, or perhaps occasionally white with snow. It is a picturesque spot.

The only material for building the fort was driftwood picked up along the shore. Some of the men were sent one hundred miles up the river to obtain better timber. The Indians gathered about in increasing numbers, appearing sullen and suspicious, and asking for pay for the use of whatever the whites wanted; particularly the driftwood, which was their special prize, coming to them fortuitously and as if sent from the Great Spirit. It was of much value to them as the only supply for fire, which was still to the Indian mind a great gift and mystery. Supplies of food, also, were withheld, and this gave the whites considerable concern. However, the fort was at length completed; it was by no means a mere palisade, but quite sufficient for defense from the savages. It was one hundred feet square, and surrounded by an outer wall of planks whip-sawed, thirty inches wide, six inches thick, and twenty feet long. At the top was a balustrade four feet high with loop holes and slip doors; a gallery inside enabled the sentinel to pace the wall and keep a sharp lookout of the sur-



rounding country. There was an inner wall twelve feet high, of sawed plank; within this were the houses, built of driftwood, and one of stone. There were two bastions and at each angle a water tank to be drawn upon in case of fire. This was a substantial fort for the conditions. No Indians were allowed within, but must do their trading at a small window. Here were enacted afterward many stirring historic scenes, and some of the best known of the early traders were located at this strategic point.

Friendly relations were finally established with the suspicious Walla Wallas; the whites were to hunt and trade; and what was more remarkable, the Walla Wallas agreed to make peace with the Snakes; among whom, too, trouble had been made by a band of the Iroquois hunters, quite a large force of whom were employed as trappers. These irresponsible men had stolen some beaver traps, and deserted to the Snakes, wasting their substance in wanton life with the natives. But after peace was established McKenzie with a party of fifty-five went among the Shoshones, leaving Ross in charge of the fort. The next year McKenzie with six men went into the Nez Perce country. This was a season of general Indian trouble. There was war with the Blackfoot people, and bands of robbers passed through the mountains. McKenzie had a meeting with one of these that tested his nerve. Being obliged to take charge of some valuable goods, he was soon visited by Indians who considered him too weak to keep them; and they be-

gan appropriating what they wanted. He then opened a keg of powder, lit a slow match, and told them to leave; if they did not he would light the powder. They sullenly withdrew; but for him, and for McKinlay, who afterward once resorted to the same means, they acquired great respect.

The same year occurred two very unnecessary slaughters of Indians, one on the Cowlitz, and the other in the Umpqua Valley. The first was started by one of the deserters who had made trouble with the Shoshones. Being received again at Astoria, he was sent to the Cowlitz, and persuaded some others to commit outrages upon the Indian women. For this he was very properly killed by the natives. The report reached Astoria that a wanton murder had been committed, and Keith, who was not a successful governor, sent Ogden, recently arrived in Oregon, with a force of Iroquois Indians to inquire into the matter. Reaching the spot, and gaining the good-will of the chief, How How, who was assisting in finding the murderers, Ogden was startled by the sudden firing of the Iroquois upon the Indian village, killing the Cowlitz indiscriminately. How How was enraged, and was restrained only by the promise of friendship, and that this should be cemented by marriage of his daughter to a white man at the fort. He went to Astoria, but on the return his party was fired upon by Chinooks, enemies of the Cowlitz; the guard was excited and called out that the Cowlitz were attacking them, and the whites also then fired

upon the Cowlitz. All faith in the whites was now at an end, and the Cowlitz country was closed.

The Iroquois, sixty in number, were a people hard to manage, and it was an error to bring them to Oregon. They were then sent to the Willamette Valley, but as there were trappers enough here, they were allowed to cross the Calapooia Mountains into the Umpqua country. There they found the Indians friendly, but timid, and although consenting to let them trap, would not sell them furs nor their horses, nor women. The Iroquois then began taking the horses; they were resisted, and then mercilessly fired upon the Umpquas, killing many. As an end of the trouble, the messengers from the scene of the massacre, going to Astoria, were set upon at Oak Point by Klatskanis, and killed. Three of the Klatskanis were convicted and hanged.

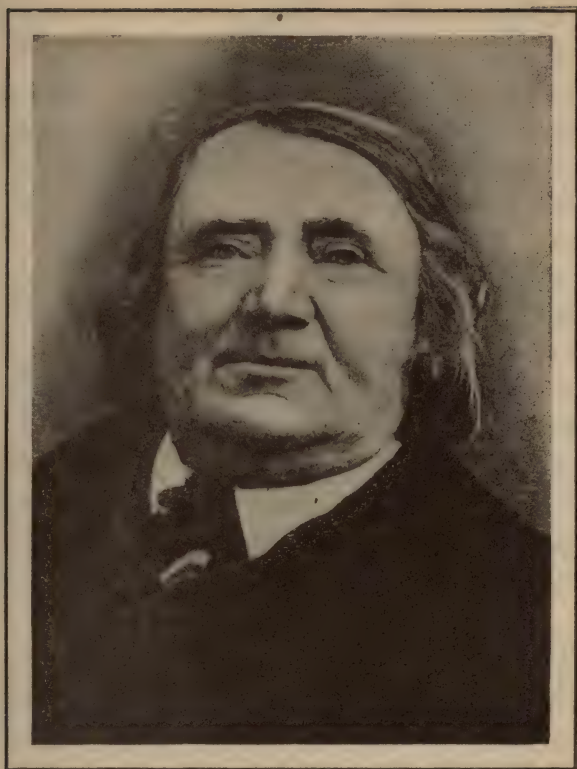
By these causeless acts of aggression much of the trapping country was closed, and the profits of the year were reduced. It will also be concluded that the Northwesters were sowing the seeds of distrust, and that their men were gradually becoming demoralized and irresponsible. Their success depended entirely upon keeping the good-will of the Indians; but this they hardly realized, and no one of their number seemed to have the force of character or good judgment to bring matters to a system. The Indians were antagonized, but not brought to subjection, nor was any basis of lasting agreement laid. It is doubtful whether, if there had not come a change soon, the



fur business could have been continued many years longer. The Northwesters had about three hundred men west of the Rocky Mountains, but if anything like a general Indian uprising had occurred, many, probably, would have deserted to the Indians. About all the whites could have done in case of such a general disturbance would have been to divide and arm the friendly Indians. But this policy would have simply changed trade to war; and for war they had no use. There was no money in it.

Peter Skeen Ogden, above referred to, was of a highly respectable family in Quebec, being a son of Chief Justice Ogden of that province. He entered the Northwest Company's service in 1811, and was transferred to the department of the Columbia a few years later. He became a permanent settler of Oregon, and as the years passed, a very useful American citizen. Another Oregon settler, who arrived in 1818, was Louis Pichette, who led the remnant of a band of twenty-five from Canada. Still another, who made Oregon his home under both British and American rule, and was one of the best of citizens, was James Birnie, who was a native of Aberdeen, Scotland, and entering the Northwest service was sent to Canada, and thence to the Columbia. In 1820 a fort was built among the Wascos at the Dalles, and placed in charge of Birnie. His later home was at Astoria, and finally at Cathlamet.

In 1821 the most stirring and valuable man that



JAMES BIRNIE

Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Astoria.





the Northwesters had in Oregon, Donald McKenzie, who came first with Mr. Hunt to the Columbia, and had gradually become the leader of affairs in the upper country; who had made friends with the Wascos, had built Fort Walla Walla, had opened the Snake River and the Nez Perce country, and had improved his department as much as Keith at Astoria had suffered his to decline, after another tour on the Snake River, crossed the mountains to York Factory, where his abilities were so much valued that he was made governor of the Red River department—the place next to governor-general. He was easily the most capable man of the partners in Oregon, though of the type of Simpson, a hard military character, valuing peace, as a condition of trade, but essentially without human sympathy or great ideas.

McDougal, Ross, Cox, Keith, Corney, the McDonalds, and Laroche, after this period, which did not formally end until 1824, along with McKenzie, disappear from the scene. Ogden, McKay, Pichette, and Birnie, remain. The contribution of the Northwesters, although not very great to the growth of Oregon, was thus considerable and memorable. Their occupancy covered a transition period, when the best energies of their company were required in a struggle with the Hudson's Bay Company and the department of the Columbia was allowed to run itself. There was grave uncertainty all this time also about the political future of Oregon, whether it would

become the territory of Great Britain, or a part of the United States. The period of its operation here was therefore, as well as on account of its methods of business and control of its servants, a period of decadence.

## CHAPTER XII

### RESTORATION AND CONSUMMATION





THE chief concern of the Northwest Fur Company, from 1814 to 1821, was its contest with the Hudson's Bay Company, and forcing a union which would give them the actual legal monopoly granted to the older company. Upon this everything depended. The course of its affairs in Upper Canada, and west of the Rocky Mountains; and the languishing, and on the whole demoralized condition in the department of the Columbia in the effort to carry on the trade as a mere private combination, was sufficient evidence that without obtaining the exclusive right to trade, the business must come to an end before many years. The only way to gain such rights was through incorporation with the Hudson's Bay Company.

But before seeing how they came out in this struggle, we must notice what the Americans were doing, if anything; and how the important question of ownership of Oregon was advancing. The various steps of the American Government will be summarized later, but what was happening in the interval between 1814, when Astoria fell, and 1821, when McKenzie went to York, had a very important bearing on the occupation of Oregon by the British. It will therefore be told here.

During this period of seven years the United States Government was very quiet on the Pacific Coast. Only what was absolutely necessary to maintain the results of the war of 1812 was required.

That war was fought to a draw. Both sides had had enough of it, and both were ready to quit. The American Administration, that of Madison, was not heartily sustained, and although carrying a popular majority, and maintaining the Democratic Party in power, rather widened the breach with the money interests. Andrew Jackson, the popular idol and military hero, came up out of the turmoil, and for many years dominated the politics of the United States. But as to the causes of the war, or acquisition of territory, there was no mention in the treaty of peace.

As to any change in territorial limits between the two countries, this was formally disallowed at the Treaty of Ghent, signed December 24, 1814. It was here expressly agreed that "all places, territories and possessions whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the war, or which may be taken after signing this treaty, excepting only the islands mentioned [in the bay of Fundy], shall be restored without delay." As to Astoria this seems to have been overlooked—(as its capture was not known when the treaty was signed) until the attention of the government was called to it by Mr. Astor, who still wished to reinstate the Pacific Fur Company if he could have sufficient guarantees of protection. A few months after the war closed Monroe announced to the British agent at Washington that he would reoccupy Astoria; but it was not until two years afterward that any steps for doing so were taken. Then the United States sloop of war "On-



tario," commanded by Captain J. Biddle, with J. H. Prevost as commissioner with the captain, was ordered to the Columbia "to assert the claim of the United States to the sovereignty of the adjacent country and without the employment of force." The British plenipotentiary, Bagot, at Washington, desired to learn the object of the cruise of the "Ontario," and was courteously informed by John Quincy Adams. Bagot at once denied that Astoria had been captured, but maintained that it had been bought by British subjects, and the territory even before Astoria was established by Astor had been taken possession of for the British King, and was a part of his dominions.

The matter was then referred to London, for decision of Rush, the American minister, and Castlereagh, British secretary of foreign affairs. Rush made it plain that Astoria had been in possession of American citizens, and that it fell as a consequence of an armed British attack. Castlereagh then admitted the rightful restoration, but feared that the appearance of an American sloop-of-war might lead to difficulties. He was assured by Rush of the discretion of the American officers. Directions were then sent to the officers of the post at Astoria to deliver up the sovereignty to the Americans when they came. After stopping and leaving Prevost at Valparaiso, where he had diplomatic business also, Biddle came on to the Columbia, and took temporary possession of Astoria and the country. Biddle was

scarcely empowered to do this alone, and when the British commander of the squadron in the Pacific, Captain Sherriff, was informed by the admiralty from London, through Commodore Bowles at Rio Janeiro, he at once waited upon Prevost, told him the instructions, and courteously offered him a British ship in which to proceed to the Columbia, and complete the business. This was the frigate "Blossom," and her conveyance was as courteously accepted. She reached the Columbia October 1st, and on the 6th Astoria was formally surrendered, by Captain Hickey of the "Blossom," and by James Keith, of the Northwest Fur Company. This was acknowledged on the part of America by Prevost.\* The British flag was taken down, and the Stars and Stripes were run up. Placards were placed on both Cape Hancock and Point Adams, stating the change in sovereignty. The utmost good feeling prevailed, and the whole affair seems to have been a contest of courtesies from the first.

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\*Prevost on entering the Columbia river took a very sound Yankee observation of the harbor and bar. It seems very different from the distortions of Vancouver, or the exaggerations of Irving. Writing to John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, he says of the mouth of the Columbia: "The bay is spacious; contains several anchoring places in sufficient depth of water, and is by no means so difficult of ingress as has been represented. Those enjoying the exclusive commerce have probably cherished an impression unfavorable to continuance, growing out of the incomplete survey of Lieutenant Broughton. It is true that there is a bar extending across the mouth of the river, at either extremity of which there are at times appalling breakers; but it is equally true that it offers, at the lowest tides, a depth of 21 feet of water, through a

This picturesque restoration, however, was understood to have little significance beyond assertion of national dignity on both sides, the United States not wishing to disregard even an unimportant result, as it then viewed it, of a national contest, and the British asserting their dignity by freely and handsomely carrying to the last scruple their obligation. But the status in Oregon remained unchanged. Keith took pains to ask of Prevost what disposition of Astoria the United States now would make, and what effects might be anticipated on the fur business. Prevost very discreetly replied that he could not answer what his government might undertake, or to express their views; but that if any change in the status of the fur business was made it would only be with due regard to existing rights and interests, and property would not be taken without payment. This was equivalent to permission to continue, and was so understood. As to the actual occupation of Oregon, the British ministry soon asserted that the restoration of Astoria was a mere formality; the American occupation in the first place was an encroachment, and its restoration was only to its first status, so it was still an encroachment.

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passage exempt from them, of nearly a league in width. The Blossom, carrying more guns than the Ontario, encountered a change of wind while in the channel; was compelled to let go her anchors, and when again weighed, to tack and beat in order to reach the harbor; yet found a greater depth, and met with no difficulty then, or when she left the bay. . . . With the aid of buoys the access to vessels of almost any tonnage may be rendered secure."



The next year, 1818, the two governments formally took up the question of northwest boundary. By the first article the forty-ninth degree of north latitude from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky (Stony) Mountains, was agreed upon; and by the second, joint occupancy of Oregon by both Americans and British was agreed upon. This article was very carefully worded, and on some points very indefinite. It was "agreed that any country that may be claimed by either party [United States or Great Britain] on the Northwest Coast of North America, westward of the Stony Mountains, together with its harbors, bays and creeks, and the navigation of all rivers within the same, be free and open for the term of ten years from the date of the signature of the present convention, to the vessels, citizens, and subjects of the two powers, it being well understood that this agreement is not to be construed to the prejudice of any claim which either of the two high contracting parties may have to the said country." This, of course, set aside any advantage the United States held from the restoration of Astoria; and as possession is considered nine points in law, it was thought by the British to give them Oregon. In ten years more it would be well occupied by them; as it actually was.

A point not very definitely stated was for what purposes the country was to be free and open to American citizens; but as it was universally understood to be of no value except for fur trade, no

thought of the right of settlement seems to have been entertained.

In 1819 a treaty signed by Spain made the forty-second parallel of latitude, from the head of the Arkansas to the South Sea, or Pacific, the boundary between the United States and Spanish possessions. Thus the country jointly occupied by Americans and British was limited on the south to what is now the California line. In 1825 the boundary on the north between England and Russia was agreed upon as 54 degrees 40 minutes. The United States had no use for Oregon except as it might be desired by its citizens, and its value and resources were unknown. It was generally thought, from reports of Lewis and Clark, and Hunt, and even down as late as 1846, when Greenhow wrote for Oregon, that the country west of the Rocky Mountains was unfit for agriculture, except in small patches. The Willamette Valley alone was considered fit for settlement. Greenhow says, "Those countries (Oregon and parts further north), indeed, contain lands in detached portions which may afford to the industrious cultivator the means of subsistence, and also, in time, of procuring some foreign luxuries; but they produce no precious metals, no cotton, no coffee, no rice, no sugar, no opium." He says that "capital invested in agriculture, pasturage, cutting timber, fishing, and other pursuits" here may gain or save some revenue, but can "yield but slender returns." It was no wonder that with such impressions of Oregon—or worse—

the United States should simply arrange the dispute in a manner comporting with dignity, and let the real issue, if there were enough for an issue in it, slide over.

This settlement suited the Northwesters perfectly. They had a use for Oregon, 500,000 square miles of the best fur-bearing country in the world, carrying also the trade of the entire Northwest Coast, and they redoubled their efforts to bring the Hudson's Bay Company to terms.

The story of this conflict, and its bearing on Oregon, must now be taken up.

The Hudson's Bay Company, as they were opposed by the Northwesters, and as their back territory was invaded, pressed their claims farther and farther west. Not only the shores of the bay itself, and the waters that flowed into the bay, but even the course of streams that flowed into the Arctic, and then into the Pacific, were claimed. By the Northwesters these claims were as vigorously denied. The Hudson's Bay Company's routes were paralleled, forts were duplicated, and after an period of angry dispute hostilities broke out. War was brought on by what seemed to the Northwesters as a most unwarranted and unfair attempt to cut off the fur territory by blanketing a territory of 100,000 square miles under a charter of settlement.

This was the scheme of a Scotch lord, Selkirk. Whether it was from an interest in colonization, or a mere plan of outflanking the Northwesters, may



perhaps be in doubt. It was understood as the latter. Selkirk obtained from the Hudson's Bay Company a title to 100,000 square miles of land south and west of Lake Winnipeg, to be known as Assiniboia, or Ossinobia, and running in such a way as to shut off the routes of the Northwesters, and shield those of the Hudson's Bay. A colony of Highlanders was settled there in 1812. In 1814 it was proclaimed by the governor, Miles McDonnell, after declaring the extent of his territory, that all persons were prohibited from carrying out of this territory any provisions, either of flesh, dried meat, grain, or vegetables, for that year. This proclamation was resisted by the Northwesters, and the colonists became alarmed and mostly left. More settlers were sent the next year, prepared to fight, and war began. In 1816 posts were taken and destroyed on both sides, but with the end that the main post of the settlers at Fort Douglas was captured, and many of the people were killed. Houses and mills were burned. These fights were carried on largely by Indians, and were of the murderous sort known to border warfare. Governor Semple, of the colony, was killed, and in 1820 Selkirk himself, who had come to America, died.

The dispute between the two companies, which the British Government had allowed to run along without notice, could not now be ignored. It was evident that no government authority, such as the country cared to support, would be effective at so great a distance from the Canadian capital, and only one

course to insure peace lay open; that was just what the Northwesters wanted, and had been striving for—union of the two rival fur companies. This could only be done under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company. After a long investigation before Parliament, in 1819, it was decided that union should be made under government authority. Each company was to furnish half the capital stock, which was now to be £200,000 for each. But as the validity of the Hudson's Bay charter was questioned, and had been by none more than the Northwesters themselves, it became necessary now that a new charter, or grant, should be made. A suitable measure was prepared and carried through Parliament, and passed July 2, 1821, authorizing the king to give grants or licenses to any body corporate, company or person, for the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians in all such parts of North America as had not been already granted to the Hudson's Bay Company; and that west of the Rocky Mountains Americans should not be excluded from the territory open to joint occupancy. All others should be, except the grantees. Exclusive trade was what was aimed at, and this was obtained; all defects in the original Hudson's Bay charter were cured. The act is of great interest. After reciting the reasons for making such a grant, that war and damage to the subjects of the king were resulting, injury to the natives and loss of trade, it provides "That from and after the passing of this act, it should be lawful for

his majesty, his heirs or successors, to make grants or give his royal license, . . . to any body corporate, . . . of or for the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians of North America," etc., "and all such grants and privileges shall be good and effectual for securing to all such bodies, . . . the sole and exclusive privileges of trading with the Indians," etc. It was specifically provided that the privileges extended over the territory of Hudson's Bay Company, and over Oregon, except as related to Americans. For the better government of the country the Canadian jurisdiction was extended over all this territory, with justices of the peace to try civil cases of less than \$1,000, but with power to refer higher causes, and all criminal causes, to Upper Canada. Especial mention was made of moral and religious instruction to the Indians, and that the liquor traffic should be diminished or entirely suppressed.

In due time, after the passage of this act, the privileges thus provided were granted to the Hudson's Bay Company, and to William McGillivray, of Montreal, Simon McGillivray, of Suffolk Lane, London, and Edward Ellice, of Middlesex, on the part of the Northwest Company. All others of British allegiance were forbidden to trade in the territory, and all other nationalities, except Americans, in the jointly occupied territory; justices of the peace were appointed from among the company's servants, and the authority of Upper Canada was extended to the Pacific. Nothing could have been more desirable for



the Northwesters. The new grant was immeasurably superior to the old one given by Charles, particularly that in addition to granting exclusive trade privileges it made of the employees of the company peace officers, who could call upon the forces of Canada to support their authority. It was also an advance in jurisprudence, insuring to British subjects the rights of trial by English law; but the main advantage was to the company who could thus legally, and without necessity of keeping up their own armament, send trespassers out of their territory.

Thus after ten years' of struggle the two great ends of the Northwesters were gained: One, the overthrow of Astor and the occupation of the Northwest Coast and valley of the Columbia; the other, all the privileges of exclusive trade and government monopoly enjoyed by the Hudson's Bay Company.

## CHAPTER XIII

### OREGON ORGANIZED UNDER HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY





**T**HE course of history has always been greatly modified by the appearance of great men. So necessary is leadership that it has been truly said that the pre-eminence of a people depends upon its ability to produce superior characters. So long as Mexico can bring forth such men as Juarez, or Porfirio Diaz, or the colored race of America a Booker T. Washington, it has been said the Mexicans and our colored population will progress and keep pace with civilization. The great man is not now considered, as once, a pure fortuity, or a special creation of Providence, or divine gift, who was to be besought to return to heaven only after a long stay on earth, but rather as one who has for some reason or other absorbed more than others of the spirit of his time, with the will to express this. He is considered the product of environment, but far more complete than others. But even in this view there is still a great extent of mystery about such characters; it may be fortuity, or Providence. Without doubt the great man is produced by the race to which he belongs, and usually has a happy combination of qualities which enables him to grasp and use the motives of his time. But just the determining causes that send such a man here or there, and direct in what field he is to exert his stock of abilities, often become so complex as to elude all investigation. The believer in fortuity, or Providence—for the latter has as good ground for his belief as the other—must

still stand in wonder wherever a great man appears; and the historian, while not uselessly conjecturing what would have happened if the man had not come upon the scene just then, is obliged to refer much that actually happened to individual choice of a man who acted differently from perhaps any other man to have been found in the situation.

At this point in the history of Oregon—the old Oregon from California to Alaska, including New Caledonia, and from the Pacific to the Rocky Mountains—such a character appears. As noticed heretofore, Oregon had already attracted the thought and obtained action of the brightest of men of all nations; Cortez from the Spaniards; Drake and Cook from the English; La Perouse from the French; Peter the Great and Catherine II from the Russians; and Ledyard, Thomas Jefferson, and Astor from the Americans; and it seems only as carrying out of some set principle that, now that the Northwesters and Hudson's Bay Company had become amalgamated under the name and privileges of the latter, this organization should try to give Oregon its best. But there was very little in this association of adventurers, whose chief object was exclusion and gain, to prewise their choice of the man that they hit upon.

John McLoughlin, who was selected for the department of the Columbia, may scarcely deserve the title of a great man, although he ruled for twenty years a country as large as Charlemagne's as abso-



DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN





lutely and as worthily as Charlemagne. He attached himself singularly to all classes of men; he has already become an idol of history, and embodies in his life and circumstances and purposes just enough of mystery to challenge the delineations of the romancer. It is hard to understand his motives. His most bitter opponents allow that he was a man of unexampled humanity; that his sympathies were all with human liberty and popular government; that he warmly favored the cause of the Canadian patriots under Papineau; that he even considered the American system of government as best calculated to serve the ends of justice, and that human slavery—in his day the great blot on our flag—as not an unfolding of American institutions; and lynchings and border lawlessness, and the ignorance of American frontiersmen, were but passing incidents in the growth of a great people. Yet he was himself the autocrat of a great monopoly. He will best be seen, however, in the light of his own actions, and in whatever explanations of his actions he thought fit to make. He was particularly one who wrote his life in deeds.

The twenty years of Oregon history, therefore, from 1824 to 1844, is pre-eminently the age of McLoughlin. Almost every action and event in the whole territory during that time was with reference to the chief factor, and rested for its final disposition upon his decision. The latter ten years, it is true, were greatly encroached upon by Americans, but not until the very last could they avoid both a

commercial and political dependence upon McLoughlin. Their lives were in his hands; so absolute was his government that they could scarcely eat or drink, or be clothed, or sleep in safety, without his permission; though with this they could live like lords. His "age" in Oregon history was distinguished by a large number of men of unusual lives and abilities, and a peculiar cast of mind. There were Thomas McKay, Donald Manson, Archibald McKinlay, Peter Skeen Ogden, Pierre Pambrun, Dr. Barclay, Dr. Tolmie, James Douglas, besides many of less remarkable career, such as Roberts, Allen, Anderson, Dunn, and a large number of Canadians, of whom Gervais, Labonte, Pichette, Lucier, La Framboise, Du Breuil, and others who became American citizens and Oregon pioneers, were still leading characters. McLoughlin's government in the territory stands in strong contrast to that of Baranoff, at Sitka, which was distinguished by drunkenness and tyranny over the natives. McLoughlin himself never tasted any liquor but wine, and that but once a year; general sale of liquors was prohibited; the natives were not debauched, and licentiousness was repressed. It also stands in strong contrast to the government of McDougal at Astoria, or of Thorn on the "Tonquin," which was distinguished by bitter factional differences, or small intrigue; and to that of Keith, during whose administration occurred mutinies, vagabondage, and murders, now of whites and now of Indians; and general distrust and opposition. It is



true that McLoughlin had the advantage of his predecessors, coming to the government at a maturer time in the history of his company, but the greater order was due chiefly to his own ideals and preferences.

The services of McLoughlin and his men will appear as the time passes, and the events are followed in these pages; but it almost forces itself upon one to say, even at this early stage, as affording a perspective in which to estimate his work, that a period of twenty years of uncertainty and dispute over a territory that was felt to carry with it the empire of North America, and even dimly that of the Pacific Ocean, could have been covered under no other hand than that of McLoughlin without drenching the soil of Oregon with blood. McLoughlin, while conducting an exclusive fur business, brought to Oregon all that was best of the century old British fur companies' enterprise; permitted, or actually with his own hand, wove it, into the texture of our commonwealth; and at the same time guarded the orderly and peaceable settlement of the country by Americans. Allowing that the occupation of Oregon by Americans was "inevitable," its occupation by peaceable means and with high and enlightened purposes was not inevitable; Texas was obtained at the price of war which has left its stain to this day; Americans themselves won their independence by a long course of conflict, whose shadow still lingers down the years. That Oregon did not pass through the same ordeal—a war between the United States

and England over this territory undoubtedly becoming as desperate and protracted as both nations were reluctant to begin it—was due beyond all question to McLoughlin. It may be said, too, that he gave to America all she could have gained by war, and that he saved to England all that could have been saved by war. Rights, titles, interests, possession, and settlements, as well seen by the chief factor, would give the United States Oregon, and England could only save New Caledonia. McLoughlin's part, not probably at first understood by himself, was to shield the young commonwealth of Oregon until ready to be born; and to save to his own country all that was her due.

But without further anticipation we will give the plain account of McLoughlin's work, and as his partners and agents appear will supply what is known of their lives and services. These Canadian or British born men are all friends in these pages, as they stand also to the great State which has become the beneficiary of their endeavors.

McLoughlin was born in the city of Quebec in 1784. His parentage as to nationality seems to be a matter of question. It is stated by Bancroft that his descent was Irish. Allen seems to think it was Scotch; it has also been stated by Dr. William McKay that it was Scotch. By Rev. J. S. Griffin, who was chaplain some time at Fort Vancouver during McLoughlin's incumbency, it is said that his father was Scotch, and his mother French. Mr. Griffin, indeed, considered

that much of his suavity of manner and quick penetration of mind was due to his French blood, and compared him in mentality to Alexander Hamilton, whom he understood to be of Scotch-French ancestry. His cast of countenance, as shown by his pictures, is Gaelic, and might be Irish; there is also something of the brow and eye to remind one of the French. It has no trace of the Saxon, or English. In person he was tall, being about six feet two inches; though from a certain grandeur of manner which also might be French, he has been described as much taller, one saying he stood about six feet seven inches. He was full and round, with an immense chest.

It is stated by Bancroft that he entered the service of the Northwest Company at an early age, and also that he went to Paris and studied medicine. Whether it was after or before he entered the fur company's service that he went to Paris, it is not stated; but probably after. His culture and polish of manner and a certain metropolitan way came probably from residence and study abroad. After acquiring his profession he was sent out to Fort William, on Lake Superior, and was employed in the duties of the healing art. Here he was brought into contact with Alexander Mackenzie, the great spirit of the Northwest Fur Company, and the explorer of Mackenzie's River, and the route across the continent to New Caledonia. It was not long, however, that he enjoyed this companionship; Mackenzie was drowned in Lake Superior, and in absence of any other McLoughlin as-



sumed the place he left vacant, and so well pleased his employers by his promptness and fidelity, that he was retained as factor. At this place he also met a youth of nineteen who was destined to be his life companion. This was James Douglas, afterward Sir James. Douglas was a picturesque character, being a direct descendant of the Earl of Angus, and of the Black Douglas, famed in Scottish history; though he was himself born in the Island of Jamaica, and his mother was a creole. Douglas was as tall as McLoughlin, but of dark complexion, and jetty hair; well reflecting the features of the Black Douglas. In casting about for some one to go to Oregon Kenneth and McGillivray could think of no one better fitted than McLoughlin. He combined great expedition with great moderation; he was firm to the point of stubbornness; kept his own council, and was scrupulously faithful. They needed most of all a man that they could trust, and who under a general policy needed no minute directions. Such they believed McLoughlin would prove. When he heard of his appointment he said to Douglas, "Come with me, lad; you shall be like a son to me." He was at that time but thirty-seven or thirty-eight, but was already almost an old man, both in his fatherly sentiments and manners, and in his appearance. Douglas was appointed, and was more of a son to McLoughlin than a subaltern, and remained so until the day of McLoughlin's death; though in temperament, disposition, and general ideas he was much unlike



SIR GEORGE SIMPSON



ASTORIA IN 1811





his superior, being cool and calculating, and indisposed to overlook his own interest. McLoughlin had at this time a family, having married the widow of Alexander McKay, who was lost in the destruction of the "Tonquin."

After having made preparations for the journey to the Columbia McLoughlin was delayed for a time, waiting for Sir George Simpson, the governor of the company in America, to come with him. The importance of the post, or the department, was thus recognized and the need of careful organization. Simpson was also to make a tour of the coast. Quite singularly very little record has been left of the trip across, though it was probably by the route so graphically described by Father Blanchet, through the pass between the stupendous peaks of Mount Hooker and Mount Brown, and by the spring that feeds the farthest stream of the Columbia. With Simpson McLoughlin forms a curious contrast; and never had very close friendship. The governor was the son of an English school teacher, and had peremptory and rather bombastic manners. He was harsh in his ideas, and no believer in conciliation. In treating the causes, some time afterward, of the murder of McLoughlin's son, by his own men, in Alaska, Simpson incurred the lasting displeasure of the doctor.

Upon reaching Astoria in 1824 Simpson and McLoughlin prepared for a permanent organization of the department. It seems that McLoughlin took the lead. He was impressed at once that the chief post

was not yet in the right place. Nearly all the furs came from the Columbia or the Willamette, and it was a clear waste of time for the bateaux to proceed farther down the rivers than their confluence, provided ships could ascend so far. Much of the weakness of the authority of the Astoria fort over the Indians and their own people he saw at once was due to its distant location. Place the fort within easy reach of the bulk of the population and business, was his observation. This very apparent conclusion, once stated, needed no argument. Whatever reason had once existed for making the emporium at Astoria, such as to keep the good-will of the Chinooks, who at first wished to do the trading, and not let the whites reach the upper tribes, had long since passed away; the white brigade left Astoria every year, and had done so for ten years, and met the upper tribes on their own grounds; but the rut once formed, Keith had been sticking in it ever since. The instantaneous perception of the commercial relations of the Columbia Valley showed on the start the practical mind. For almost eighty years commerce has followed McLoughlin's conception of the proper place for the emporium.

To determine whether ships could reach the confluence of the two main rivers, Willamette with Columbia, McLoughlin began at the mouth of the Columbia, and surveyed the north shore line as far as the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. The Willamette Valley was pretty well known; but it was im-

portant to understand the valley on the north, toward Puget Sound, which is but a continuation of the same depression. This he explored for 100 miles. Having obtained the information he needed, and finding a practicable channel for ships up the Columbia, he drew a map, and consulted with Governor Simpson. The reason mentioned above, that the chief fort should be near the business, was supplemented by the desirability of maintaining an agricultural station, and at Astoria the agricultural land was limited—or at least not cleared; while, at a point up the river there was abundance of the finest land, and almost unlimited stock range. Without much doubt a place on Sauvie's Island, or Scappoose Plains, or perhaps on the Willamette, would have been chosen, as the most available, but for one consideration: The title to the country was not settled, and Simpson doubted whether England would be able to hold south of the Columbia; but the river was thought to be the "natural line," and the settlement north of the river would assist in bringing the British claim down to that line. The future policy of McLoughlin, so far as he could determine settlements, was foreshadowed at this point in the history. It was decided therefore to build the fort on the north bank of the Columbia. A place six miles up from the mouth of the Willamette was found suitable. Here were broad lands, a low, wooded plain, but little undulating, extending some miles back from the river; an elevated prairie, Mill Plain, at no great distance, and sufficient open



upland for a large farm. It was a beautiful point, noticed by Broughton as Belle Vue Point, but not his Point Vancouver, which was opposite the mouth of the Sandy, near Washougal.

The fort was first built about a mile up the river from the final site, and back from the flood plain, but this was found inconvenient, and it was moved the next year to the higher ground which touches the river. Here an ample space was cleared, an area four hundred and fifty feet by seven hundred feet was inclosed by a board wall twenty feet high, with bastion at one corner. There were double gates in front, and within these was first seen, commanding the entrance, the low French style house of the chief factor; having a horseshoe stairway as the entrance, and defended by a brass cannon in front. There were also piles of cannon balls; but the appearance of military organization here ceased. There was no gallery around the wall inside, and little sign of preparation for war. The shops and store houses were ranged around the inner sides of the area, and the building most observed was the dining hall. In front of this on a tower made of four poles, and sheltered by a small roof from the weather, hung the bell, about like that of a village church, which summoned the men to their meals. Near by was bachelor's hall, where, in after times, the clerks and visitors read and talked and smoked. McLoughlin himself used no tobacco, except occasionally snuff.

McLoughlin saw quickly what was to be done in the

vast territory over which he was to be master. No doubt but Governor Simpson, who looked over the field with him, joined in forming the policy that was taken up; but it seems probable from many circumstances that McLoughlin took the initiative, and that Simpson rather gave the matter his approval.

After deciding that the commercial center of the region was most conveniently and naturally to be placed near the mouth of the Willamette, though on the north side of the Columbia, his next concern was to organize the territory, and establish a recognized authority. The first step was to man the old posts that the Northwesters had established, and to build new ones. The next step was to control the Indians, and to interest them in collecting furs; the third was to gather up and monopolize all the industries of the region—destroying competition and bringing all who happened to come to the Northwest Coast into direct dependence upon his commercial post at Vancouver. He seems to have been fully convinced of the value of Oregon as a fur country to his company, and without any reservation set himself as his life task, to establish here a permanent industry. Whatever his sentiments at this time as to the ultimate destiny of Oregon, he was impressed that for many years, and probably for generations, all the northern part of this territory would be most suitable for the fur trade.

Carrying out the first object named above, that is to occupy the old posts of the Northwesters and to

build new ones, he turned his attention to the far north, and established routes from New Caledonia to the Columbia, both by land and by water. The old Northwesters' posts here were that on McLeod Lake, established in 1805; forts on Lake Fraser and Lake Stuart, established in 1806; and Fort George, at the mouth of Fraser and Stuart rivers, built in 1807. It was from this point that Simon Fraser floated down the Fraser River, which was then known as the Taoutche Tesse, of Alexander Mackenzie, and had been assumed to be the upper branch of the Columbia. Fraser reached the mouth of the stream, and although disappointed that it did not lead to the river entered and explored an hundred miles by Vancouver's lieutenant, had the satisfaction of demonstrating the existence of a new great river, which was called by his name. In 1813 Fort Kamloops was built at the junction of the Thompson River with the Fraser, the former stream commemorating David Thompson, the astronomer of the Northwesters, who was to have reached the mouth of the Columbia, and to have occupied it before Astor's party should arrive; but was too late. From Kamloops to the waters of the Columbia the route was across a lake country, and easily passed in canoes, and quite often in winter by dog sledges, or in summer by trains of pack horses. In 1821 Fort Alexander, on the Fraser, in honor of Alexander Mackenzie, was built. Now that McLoughlin had assumed control and revitalized the organization he opened the route from the



Fraser to the Columbia, and the annual pack of furs from all the inner parts of New Caledonia was brought to Kettle Falls, where, in 1825, a new fort was built, or rather removed from Spokane, and called Colville, for the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company at London. By this route Vancouver was connected directly with all the upper Fraser—an immense territory. The New Caledonia Brigade left regularly for this territory in April, visited the forts, in turn gathering up the catch of the previous year, distributed ammunition, traps, medicines, clothing and Indian merchandise, and gathered the peltries, with which they returned to Vancouver in September.

The first brigade to Fort Colville was not sent until the July of 1826. McLeod was in the party on his way across the Rocky Mountains, and as it was the policy of McLoughlin to establish agriculture and stockraising at the posts, to him were intrusted some pigs which were to become progenitors of large droves of hogs in the upper country. It was difficult to preserve the pigs from the Indians, who could not understand why they should be taken alive, with such infinite trouble, to the upper country. They had already been made acquainted with pork but not with pigs. After reaching Fort Walla Walla, Kitson, who with John Work was in charge of the expedition, obtained 79 horses and proceeded more expeditiously by land than by attempting to withstand the swollen current of the Columbia. Work separated

at Spokane and with nine men went into the country of the Flatheads, or Kalispels. Thus it was that trappers were distributed to the headwaters of the rivers, where they made inducements to the Indians to part with their furs for beads and blankets and guns, and to buy traps and get more beaver skins.

The same year, 1826, James Douglas, whom McLoughlin already had destined as his successor, when he should retire, and whom he therefore wished to train in a thorough understanding of the business and familiarity with the country, was sent by this route to New Caledonia, and built a fort. This was named Connully, after William Connully, who became Douglas' father-in-law. It was indeed on this very journey that the young man became acquainted with Nellie Connully, who was but a girl in her teens. She was accompanying her father upon one of his expeditions, and traveling with Douglas, who found the labors of the way much mitigated by her company; and by his many gallant attentions and assistance over the rough places of the road, she was easily persuaded to marry him. This was quite satisfactory to Connully, who was himself still young, and a dashing and energetic man. Nellie is said to have been very handsome as well as of good disposition, though of native blood on her mother's side.

Another story is told of Douglas while in the northern country. A murder had been committed at a distant post by a bad Indian, who in escaping from the punishment that was determined, came to the

village where Douglas was for the time stopping and holding a banquet. It was told him secretly by an Indian woman that the murderer was at the Indians' camp; excusing himself he went there immediately, and found the tent deserted except for a few old women, but being pointed to a bundle of skins on the floor detected the point of an arrow; and firing in killed the one that he was seeking. He was waited upon soon after by the chiefs of the tribe, who demanded blankets, or other goods, to pay the relatives of the man killed. They admitted that he was a bad man and a murderer, and deserved his punishment; but in their tent he was their guest, and they were responsible to his people for his life, and must pay his relatives. However, he would not listen to their demand, and sent them away. Not long after, while he was alone in the fort, the entire tribe appeared in war dress, entered the place, deliberately seized and tied Douglas and laid him on a table; then asked if he would pay for the execution. He at first threatened and cursed them roundly, but as they simply left him tied, and looked on gravely, he finally concluded that the safest way was to pay the demand. He was then released. The Indians were undoubtedly right, as it was a principle of English as well as Indian law that even a criminal should not be judged guilty without trial, and that an execution was not a private but a public concern.

A picturesque character of these early years was David Douglas, the botanist, for whom the common



fir, the *Pseudotsuga Douglasii*, is named. He arrived in Oregon in 1824, being at Vancouver even before the fort was established there. He was in North America for ten years, and added some thousand names to the description of plants. He was very eccentric, and traveled in all wild places and everywhere among the Indians, becoming well known to all the tribes. They looked upon him as a great medicine, or tomaniwus man. He drew fire from heaven through a burning glass, and was an unerring marksman. They supposed, too, that when he put on his blue goggles he was enabled to see the spirits, and felt nervous accordingly. He would sometimes amuse himself by pouring seidlitz powders into a glass, and while the water was foaming, swallow it down; while the simple natives wondered that he could take boiling drink. His shooting, however, was entirely harmless, being often for bringing cones from the tops of the trees, or simply for his day's mess. He was an idealist, and looked with great disdain upon the mercenary spirit of the fur traders. He enjoyed the hospitality of the company, however, from one end to the other, but often rebuked them notwithstanding on the principle that truth among friends is more complimentary than flattery. Once with Factor Black, who was at Kamloops, he was nearly compelled to fight a duel for saying that not one of the Hudson's Bay people had a heart above a beaver skin. Douglas was killed in the Hawaiian Islands in 1834, by falling into a pit for capturing

wild cattle, which he was examining, and in which was trapped an infuriated animal. Black also was killed in 1841; his murderer being a young Indian whose uncle had died, old Tranquille, a friend, but whose wife declared that he was made sick through Black's influence, and called upon the nephew for vengeance. He reluctantly accomplished his mission; but was condemned by his people, who agreed to deliver him up; and was shot by them while singing his death song, and trying to escape by swimming across the river.

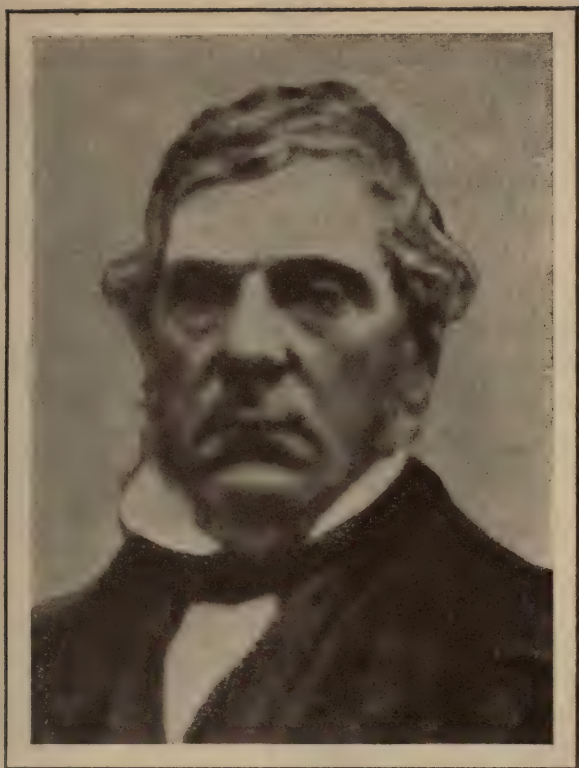
Dease and Yale (James Munrox Yale) were well-known factors of New Caledonia at this time.

Fort Langley, at the mouth of the Fraser, was projected in 1826. In December of that year a party was sent north under James McMillan, Thomas McKay, F. N. Annance and John Work, with thirty-six French Canadians, Kanakas, and Iroquois. Their object was to explore the Fraser, and find a suitable point for a fort. They preferred the route down the Columbia, and thence over to Shoalwater Bay and Gray's Harbor, and up the Chehalis River. It was an unpleasant time for exploration, rain falling almost the entire period. But they reached the Fraser in safety, December 16th. It was some time before they found a site that suited, but this was at length done some distance up the river, which they found at that place "about as broad as the Columbia at Oak Point." The Fraser, as is well known, enters the Gulf of Georgia by two mouths. In the spring

the schooner "Cadborough," which had been built in England the year before, arrived. This was a very useful and well-known craft. She came first to Fort Vancouver, being under the command of Captain John P. Swan, and bringing thirty men. She was commanded later by Emilius Simpson; then in turn by Sinclair, Ryan, Brochie; and finally by James Scarborough, for whom the hill above Chinook Village is now usually called. With the "Cadborough" James McMillan and twenty-five men returned in the summer and built Fort Langley upon the site selected in the winter.

In October of the same year the occupants of the new fort were surprised to see a well-equipped expedition coming down the Fraser. It proved to be no less a person than Sir George Simpson, the governor; traveling with Chief Factor Malcolm McLeod and a Dr. Hamlyn. He had come by the Athabasca pass, and after reaching Fort Kamloops determined to risk the passage of the Fraser and visit the forts on the coast, rather than cross to the Columbia and take that route to Vancouver. Through the mountains he found the Fraser very violent; but met with no accident. Simpson was a very active man, of moderate stature, but athletic, and capable of great labor. He personally supervised the entire business of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, and brought this up to an efficiency such as only a modern railway company might equal. His duties, however, were magisterial rather than industrial, as the busi-





FRANCIS ERMATINGER

A Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company.



ness not only had to be conducted, but the territory had to be governed, by his company. He returned an immense income to the English stockholders; several million dollars per year. Fort St. James, on Lake Stuart, was made the chief trading point in the New Caledonia district, and Francis Ermatinger, of Kamloops, was made chief factor.

Fort Nisqually, at the head of Puget Sound, on a broad plain commanding a wide prospect, was built and equipped for a permanent and important fort, as it subsequently became. The Umpqua country was also occupied, and in the course of time a regular annual expedition was made to California, trading for peltries. At the head of this expedition was usually Michael La Framboise. The journey was made entirely on horseback, and the trappers, the most of whom had native women as wives, took their families along with them. The Indian woman is never happier than when traveling, especially if dressed as a trapper's wife usually was, in rich and expensive cloths, with beaded moccasins, and mounted upon the best of riding ponies, gayly decked and caparisoned with bright blankets, silver baubles on the bridles, and brilliant martingales, surcingle, and crupper. She had an easy saddle in which she sat astride, with her children on the basketlike supports behind or before. A daughter\* of one of these California trappers has told of the delight of this annual journey, her first remembrances of which were as a

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\* Rose Osant.



little child; and of the gallop across the prairies of the Sacramento, under the oak trees, and the dry leaves rustling under the horses' feet.

The valley of the Snake was also visited annually. This was the most dangerous of the trapping country, being often raided by the Blackfoot Indians, with which the Snakes and Nez Perces and Kalispels were nearly always at war. Here also came parties of American trappers, of whom a more detailed account will be given later. As early as 1826, it is stated by McLoughlin there were as many as 500 American trappers on the Snake. It was only the bravest and most discreet of the Hudson's Bay Company's men who were detailed to service here. Thomas McKay was usually commander of the Snake River Brigade.

By the year 1828, when the treaty of joint occupation of Oregon by Great Britain and the United States terminated, the entire fur-bearing district of the Pacific Coast had been organized under the Hudson's Bay Company by Dr. McLoughlin. In addition to Oregon and New Caledonia, and trading both by land and sea to California, an agreement was made for the lease of the privilege of trading on the Russian coast, and for this New Archangel was to be supplied with wheat from the Columbia River. The schooner "Cadborough" became a most useful factor in the business. Another schooner was built at Vancouver, called the "Vancouver," but proved a poor sailor, and was wrecked in broad daylight on

Queen Charlotte's Island. The steamers "Beaver" and "Otter" were subsequently brought out from England, and employed in the coasting trade. A business worth sixty thousand dollars a year was also, in the course of time, engaged in to the Hawaiian Islands. This was largely in salmon and lumber. Of these business ventures and successes details will be given later.

It is apparent, therefore, that within a very few years McLoughlin had organized the territory from end to end, and was laying the foundation for an immense business for his company. Indeed it is stated that the cargo of the annual ship sent from the Columbia to England was worth £200,000 sterling; a million dollars per year, worth in exchange, according to modern prices, double that sum; or interest on a capital of not less than twenty-five million dollars. Indeed it is doubtful whether the British company would have parted with their hold on Oregon for that sum. It is thought that during its occupancy of the Columbia Valley as much as twenty-eight million dollars' worth of furs were sent to the London stockholders. The business sense, the address and capacity of the man who year after year forwarded such wealth half way around the world, may be calculated from such results.

The success of McLoughlin in organizing the territory, while depending upon his ability, aided also by Governor Simpson, to occupy the naturally important points and bring them in commercial touch

with his post at Vancouver, though some were seven hundred to a thousand miles distant, and water travel was by boat or canoe, and land travel by horses or dog sledges, depended equally upon his ability to bring the Indians into good understanding with his company. For this he had in the first place the immense advantage of an overawing personal presence. He stood so as to look six feet and a half tall, and although among Highlanders and down east Canadians, he had the appearance, and with all but one or two exceptions actually was, the largest man in the territory. The tallest and straightest chief had to look up to him. His broad shoulders, full chest, and erect carriage, and his quaint and courtly dress and manners, carried out fully the impression made by his great stature; and to the native mind he needed only to be seen to be admired. His hair, which early turned white, fell in long silvery locks over his shoulders, and he was known among the tribes as the white-headed chief; or the white-headed Eagle.

But while thus having the advantage of a commanding personal presence, the effects of which he understood, he knew that permanent control depended upon moral qualities. It was his first care that the Indians should not be demoralized with intoxicating liquors. None was allowed except on the returns of the brigades; and on these occasions only a moderate quantity was distributed to the men. The Indians were not allowed its use. So particular was



McLoughlin to enforce this rule that learning an American ship had entered the Columbia with a quantity of liquors, he at once proceeded to the captain, and bought the entire stock. That he had no use for it, is shown from the fact that it was still on hand, unused, when the fort was moved a number of years after. The old scenes of demoralization, described by Peter Corney, were done away with under the rule of McLoughlin.

The next point that he observed with the Indians was never to deviate from his word. He understood that the Indians' idea of truth and morality was rather consistency than sincerity. If it was found that the white men always "talked with the same tongue," he was respected; if he talked with "a forked tongue," he was distrusted. Truthfulness, as in dealing with children, or indeed in controlling animals, was to be a matter of habit. The Indians had no clear standard of truth; but the person who created no expectations which he could not fulfill, commanded their esteem and could easily control them. With the Indians therefore McLoughlin maintained from the outset perfect consistency. He had a fixed price for all goods, which could not be changed, so fixed, indeed, on their minds that any change seemed morally wrong; or morally impossible. They knew precisely the value of the furs or other articles which they took to the post for trade. They understood that defective, or worthless, skins could not be sold, and that such had to be thrown

aside as "culls." So impressed upon their minds became the worthlessness of "culls" that they adopted the word under the sound "cultus," as meaning good-for-nothing. In his administration of justice, too, he always spoke with "one tongue." A wrong done to an Indian was considered by him the same as to a white man. An incident is told of an Indian being brought to Fort Vancouver charged with some offense. McLoughlin ordered that he be tied to the cannon and whipped. This was done. Almost immediately after a white man was brought charged with the same. McLoughlin, being convinced of his guilt, ordered for him the same punishment.

Such justice, strictly that of those of old time, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, life for life; one level of justice and punishment for all alike, fully satisfied the Indians.

Nevertheless, there was an assumption of authority here that was not unquestioned. Before the whites came the Indians had no chiefs. They went in bands, and until their original homes were disturbed by contact with whites, and the advantage of firearms was given some but denied to the more remote, they had little fear of enemies on their own grounds. But the whites, not understanding this sort of government, and finding it necessary to treat with the principal men, erected those to a permanent position who had been but temporarily leaders. These chiefs had been called "brothers," and had

accepted the idea that they were the equals of the whites, and that it was by some sort of agreement or allowance on their part that the whites were in their country. How it was, then, that McLoughlin should assume to administer even-handed justice, often occurred to the chiefs. On two occasions, at least, they seem to have made up their minds to test, if not to defy, his assumption of authority.

Once McLoughlin was approached by an Indian who told him that Fort Nisqually had been attacked. This was two hundred miles distant, near the head of the Sound. He was surprised, and sending for another Indian he got the same information; and from still another and another he was told the same story. Having selected his informants carefully, and thinking there could be no collusion, he was preparing a relief expedition, when opportunely there arrived some of his men from Nisqually, who said the fort was in perfect safety. He then charged the Indians with trying to deceive him, and it was admitted that it had been agreed by all the Indians to circulate the false report and induce him to weaken his force at Vancouver by a relief party to Nisqually; when they thought they would be able to take Vancouver.

The other time was when the Hudson's Bay ship "William and Ann" was wrecked at the mouth of the Columbia. This was in March, 1829. The "William and Ann" was a bark, and belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company; she was entering



the Columbia in company with the schooner "Convoy," of Boston, under Captain Thompson—this being one of the few Americans still trading on the coast. She struck on the bar, was wrecked, and all the crew perished. The goods were washed ashore, and taken by the Indians. The fate of the crew was not definitely known. It is stated by George B. Roberts in notes furnished to Bancroft for preparation of his history of Oregon, that "The crew landed with their arms wet, and hence were defenseless, and they were all murdered." The "Convoy" proceeding up the river at once informed McLoughlin of the disaster, and a company was sent to the Clatsop village near the present site of Hammond, or the Hotel Flavel, to recover the goods. There was no threat of punishment for the supposed murder of the crew. But the demand for the property was denied. Here came the conflict of authority. It had been an immemorial principle with the Clatsop Indians that whatever was brought to them from the sea belonged to them. They therefore asserted their right according to Indian law, and one of the younger chiefs, under the impulse of the moment of defiance, impudently brought forth an old dipper, and said, "Take this to your fort"—though here is a point of divergence in the story, some saying that it was an old paper framed looking glass; and still others that it was a broom!

The party of investigation was not strong enough to enforce their demand and returned to Fort Van-

couver. It was not until the return of the brigade in the fall that McLoughlin could provide a force to punish the Clatsops. Besides the insolent refusal of the tribe to return the goods the party had found a boat with the oars, belonging to the bark. They concluded that it could not have come into the possession of the Indians unless it had been brought by the crew to the land; though it has ever been asserted by the Indians that the boat was found in just that condition, with oars and all, floating unoccupied, in Young's Bay. But with this circumstance against them, and for their impudence, the schooner reaching the spot was drawn up in front of the village, ready to bombard the town. A party was sent ashore to reach the village from the rear; fire was then opened from the schooner; the Clatsops soon retreated, and took to flight. They were met by the British from behind the town and a skirmish ensued in which one Indian was killed. The village was then entered and all that was found belonging to the English was taken.

In a valuable lecture delivered before the Oregon Historical Society, Mr. Silas B. Smith contends very strongly that no murder could have been committed. He says as to the disaster:—"Felix Hathaway was one of the crew of the schooner 'Convoy.' This vessel was entering the river at the same time with the 'William and Ann,' but some distance behind; she noticed the grounding of the bark, which aided her in keeping the channel, and she entered the river

safely. Toward evening the schooner sent a boat in an attempt to rescue the people on the bark, but night coming on, and the weather becoming more boisterous, the boat returned without reaching the wreck. That night the 'William and Ann' went to pieces. Mr. Hathaway was next neighbor to my parents while they lived at Chehalem Valley, in 1836-40."

As to the murder he continues:—"The charge of murder against the natives made by the several historians, I believe, will be found entirely groundless. It is to be borne in mind that all the Indians of this tribe, individually and collectively, at that time and ever afterward, have denied that they ever murdered any of the crew of that vessel." The action of McLoughlin, he also thinks, did not justify the idea that he considered the crew had been murdered. "He sends an ultimatum to these people that they must deliver up, not the murderers, but the goods which they had picked up on the beach. That is all. And upon their refusal to deliver the goods, and their insolent behavior toward himself, he sends an armament and bombards their town, and in the fight one Indian is killed, and the rest take to flight; then the victors quietly loot the town, and recover the goods which had been saved from the wreck, and British honor feels itself sufficiently vindicated for the murder of its subjects. . . . No demand was ever made for the surrender of any murderers. No murderers of this crew were



ever executed, and no pursuit after any was ever made."

The probability is that Mr. Smith is correct in his conclusions; and it is doubtful whether Indians so near the fort would expose themselves to the punishment of life for life for the simple sake of plunder. But when the wreckage came ashore they at once felt warranted in taking what the sea gave them. They defied the authority of McLoughlin; and he, without any other warrant than that he was in the country to preserve the property of the company, punished them sufficiently to recover the property, and to establish the rule that the white man's goods, whether on ship or shore, were to be returned wherever found, and must not be taken by the Indians. This principle was established simply by force, and without reference to the ideas of the Indians.

The year before this he chastised the Umpqua Indians for the murder and robbery of the party of Jedediah Smith, an American trapper of whom more will be told later, on his way up from California. Fifteen of the party were killed by the Indians, three only escaping, and finally reaching Fort Vancouver. A company was at once sent out from Vancouver, the Umpquas were punished and the goods were recovered and returned to Smith, who returned to his trapping grounds on the Snake, but no longer feeling that he should compete with the magnanimous Chief Factor, returned across the Rocky Mountains.

The principle was thus established that the life of

all white men, whether Americans or English, was under the protection of McLoughlin in all parts of the territory. Thomas McKay was the military leader of these expeditions, and was naturally disposed to treat the Indians with severity, saying that he would revenge his father upon the red race—although perhaps expressing more ferocity in his language than he actually felt, as he is not known to have ever killed Indians wantonly or without orders.

After these signal proofs of the power of McLoughlin to punish if his orders were disobeyed, little trouble was had with the Indians; although perceiving that their supposed absolute rule was gone, no considerable number thought it worth while to oppose the new order, or were insensible to the benefits that one thoroughly respected authority throughout the region afforded. More and more they became entirely dependent upon Fort Vancouver. More and more they gave up their fur clothing and substituted the gaudily colored but less serviceable goods of white manufacture; beads, rather than shells, became the universal currency; with these the women could work ornamentations on moccasins and string necklaces that far outshone the pale *haiqua*. Any disorder among a tribe meant the instant closing of trade, the stopping of supplies of all kinds; and in a short time brought cold and hunger—as the Indians now had learned also to depend on the gun—and also slavery to old enemies, as only with good guns and plenty of ammunition could any tribe de-

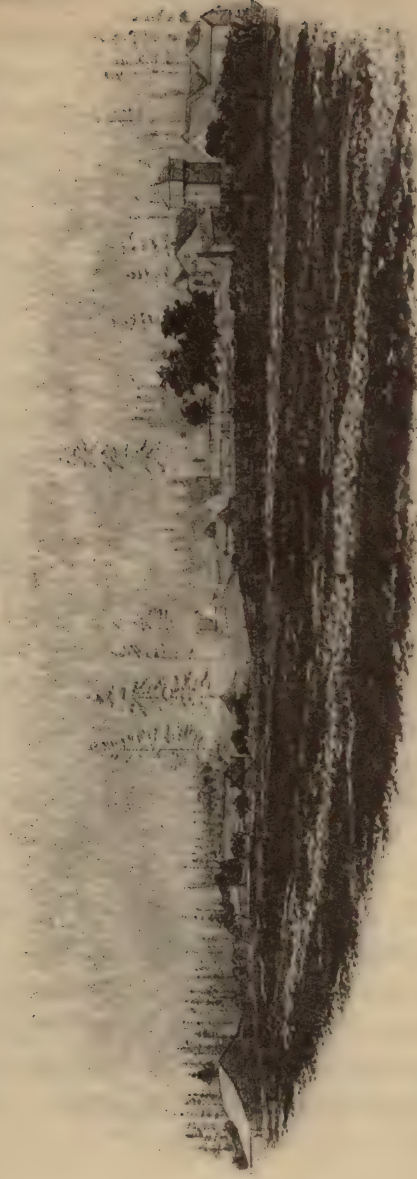
fend itself from enemies now supplied with firearms. An absolute dependence was thus easily brought about by one who knew how to maintain at the same time a perfect fidelity and an unwavering authority, and could monopolize the means of obtaining a subsistence. McLoughlin's word became final, and when his authority was once established the Indians ceased to inquire by what right he ruled, but soon came to him for advice upon all matters, and after learning his advice followed it without question.

Great as were these results it will be seen that they were all included in the franchise granted to the Hudson's Bay monopoly, in which the Northwesters had succeeded in obtaining a share. The sole traders could, under wise leadership, bring about just that state of dependence on the part of a wild people which would also ensure complete submissiveness. The only cases of defiance of the authority of the company, except the ones mentioned above, including the murder of Black, which all arose from the attempt of the natives to apply some traditional rule of action against the whites, came from the effects of competition. In the Snake River country, and even as far as Fort Walla Walla, there were American trappers, and some of them, like Bonneville, offered higher prices than those of the Hudson's Bay Company. As a consequence the Cayuses sometimes became turbulent; and once entered Fort Walla Walla, bound the Chief Factor, Peter Pambrun, and attempted to force him to make the same prices as those of



the Americans. Competition, after having once gained absolute commercial control over Oregon and New Caledonia, was the one thing dreaded by McLoughlin, and to overcome this the second period of his term, from 1832 to 1842, was chiefly devoted.

The power and spirit of the Indians west of the Cascade Mountains, however, was greatly broken in 1829, and for several years after, by an epidemic sickness, which proved even more fatal than the small-pox, which had devastated many of the tribes some years before the arrival of Lewis and Clark. This appeared to be only a form of malaria, or ague, but under it the natives disappeared by the hundreds, entire villages becoming depopulated. During the whole period of the scourge, of some three or four years, it has been stated that as many as three-fourths of the Indian population died. The account of Plomondeau, as given by Douglas, found in Bancroft's Oregon, is the picture of the plague. In 1829, the first ague summer, there were not enough of the living to bury the dead. Those not already infected, or able to move, fled to the sea coast, abandoning the dead and dying to the birds and beasts of prey. Every village presented a scene of desolation: The canoes were there drawn up on the shore; the fish-nets were spread on the branches of the willow trees to dry; the dogs were still at their posts, and watching to give the alarm; but on entering the place no voice was heard giving a welcome. The woods were



FORT NISQUALLY, PUGET SOUND, ESTABLISHED BY HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY IN 1833

After an old print.





green, the birds singing, the wild bees and other insects were busy at their task among the flowers; and the summer sky was clear and blue almost beyond its usual splendor; but the tents were silent as the grave; and often actually possessed of only corpses in all stages of decomposition. Douglas says, "Plomondeau's account is perhaps overcharged, but in the main, I firmly believe, correct; as the ague has been a fruitful source of death to every Indian tribe exposed to its attacks."

In the notes of George T. Allen\* it is said:—"The fever and ague first broke out in 1829; in the summer of 1832 the disease was very prevalent at Fort Vancouver, and at one time we had over forty men laid up with it, and a great number of Indian applicants for 'La Medicine'; and as there was then no physician at the fort Dr. McLoughlin himself had to act in that capacity."

As to the cause of this outbreak, it is said by Dr. Tolmie, who arrived about this time, that it began with the breaking up of a piece of very rich ground near Fort Vancouver; but he thinks there must have been some more general cause. This decimation, or almost destruction, of the Indian tribes of the lower Columbia has been considered by a certain class of religious writers as a special providence to subdue the heathen peoples to the true faith; as a similar pestilence on the Atlantic Coast was once considered Providential. By another class of writers and think-

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\* Bancroft.

ers, who scorn the doctrine of special providence, this scourge has been regarded in almost the same spirit, as the "fate" of the savage to fall before the civilized man, and as an illustration of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest; or more strictly, the survival of the survivors. In any just view, however, any destruction of human life is to be regarded as deplorable. By this a large body of needed laborers was taken from the productive power of the young community, and there is no certainty that the remnant of natives left were in anywise made better, but no doubt very much the worse, for the loss of their families and friends; nor does it appear that the whites were improved in any way, or that the settlement and development of the country was in any way advanced by this mortality.

The Indian explanation of the disease was in accordance with their superstitions, and in line with the reckless statements made to them by McDougal and other whites, that it was an effluvium of evil from the Americans. It happened that an American captain, Dominis, was in the Columbia the season that the scourge began. Remembering the smallpox chief at Astoria, and the bottled smallpox, and believing that disease was a spiritual agency passing from bad men, or enemies who had a strong medicine, or tomaniwus, they came to the conclusion that Dominis scattered the disease in the water beside his ship. The effects of this same dark belief, and that the Indians considered it the Americans particularly

who were masters in the art, may be traced in its sorrowful effects much farther down the course of Oregon history.

It is stated by Mrs. Frances Fuller Victor, on the authority of F. A. Lamont, a sailor on the "Owyhee," the ship of Dominis, that the disease was attributed to the Americans. In the article "Flotsam and Jetsam," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, March, 1901, she says:—"it was while the 'Owyhee' was lying in the river in 1829, that a devastating epidemic broke out amongst the Oregon Indians and spread down the coast as far as the bay of San Francisco. It seemed to originate with the Indians about the ship, and it was Captain Lamont's opinion that it was simply at first an intermittent, occasioned by some mischievous Indians getting the canoes filled with water while pulling up the stakes set in the island by the fishermen. The sickness, however, became epidemic and malignant, so that whole villages died, and there were not enough well persons to care for the sick. This state of affairs was, by the superstitious savages, believed to be intentionally brought about by Captain Dominis, who, they said, had emptied a vial of bad 'medicine' into the Columbia River, with the design to destroy them; and it would probably have gone hard with the 'Owyhee's' crew but for the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the attentions of Dr. McLoughlin, who labored faithfully, but in vain, to arrest the disease. It is stated that this epidemic, spreading even to San Francisco



Bay, carried off about thirty thousand of the Indians of the Pacific Coast."

Hon. John Minto, discussing in the September number, 1900, of the same magazine, the condition of the Indians, considers that the disorder may have originated in the use of improper food by the Indians; though it does not appear that during this season there had been any unusual scarcity which would drive the natives to use such articles as he speaks of—refuse fish, or mouldy pemmican. The disease was called by the Indians "The cold sick," which would indicate that it was the ague. Its great mortality among them may have been due to their mode of treatment, and cold taken; or more likely it was the culmination of a slow process of demoralization and infection going on for many years. Although wild and fierce and hardy when maintaining his own habits the Indian is not enduring, and easily yields to change in habit or circumstances. Since the coming of the whites in 1792, and later, the Indians of the lower river had allowed, or even promoted, the prostitution of their young women, who were even brought to the ships, and allowed on board, care being taken to receive pay beforehand. The young womanhood of the tribes was thus corrupted, and when the generation that sprang from them came on the scene, there was a marked constitutional weakening; diseases of civilization also sapping the strength. Still further, the Indian men, to whom the virtue of their daughters was an asset to be traded

away, often received the cast-off garments of the sailors, in which lurked further infection. The habits and dress were also changed from the native condition. Clothing once put on was not taken off until worn out. It consequently bred disease. The robes and skins worn by the natives, and which afforded warm clothing for the winter, while the grass or root, or bark fiber, was sufficient for summer, were sold, and more brilliant, but much less comfortable clothing was substituted. The Indians, too, were inordinately fond of sugar, or molasses, and often used it to excess, when it could be obtained. All these things worked a change for the worse in the health and vigor of the natives, and also in a measure weakened their spirit. They thus became an easy prey to a disorder that produced only a temporary sickness among whites. The element of terror, and consequent neglect, doubtless added much to the fatality of the disease. Over sickness with which they were familiar their treatment was very successful; but over sickness contracted from whites it had little control, and the Indian doctors were not trusted to cure such disorders. The Indians of this time were said by Simpson to be terrified even with a slight illness, crying, "I shall die, I shall die."

The only fatality about the intercourse of a civilized with an uncivilized, particularly a nomadic, people lies in the ignorance of the latter of the dangers that lurk in the vices and normal habits, even, of the civilized race; and the indisposition of the civilized,

as usually shown, to teach proper morality and sanitation, along with trade and industry. Where this has been done—and the instances are not few—the “fate” has not overtaken the weaker race. It is to be sincerely hoped that the experience of the diseases and disasters that befell the Indians in Oregon, even when docile and well disposed, will not be cited as a justification of the doctrine of extinction, as the civilized still mingle with the uncivilized; but that the real causes may be recognized, and greater intelligence be applied to regulate such intercourse, that life may be saved rather than lost. Evolution and progress do not lie so much in elimination of the unfit—if such can ever be segregated—as in securing favorable variations toward a higher type. This is done only as life is preserved.



## CHAPTER XIV

### McLOUGHLIN'S RULE IN OREGON; CONTINUED



**I**N the foregoing chapter the problem of occupation of the territory, and the problem of controlling the Indians, has been treated; and the success in each particular. The only great disaster to the native tribes was the epidemic, which destroyed more than half the natives of the lower Columbia River. This was only incidentally due to the Hudson's Bay Company, whose prohibition of intoxicating liquors, and policy of marrying their factors and employees to the daughters of the Indian chiefs had tended greatly to lessen the evils of drunkenness and the immorality that had been aggravated by the habits of the Northwesters, and no doubt by the Americans trading on the coast before them. The requirement on the Indians not to encamp within a certain distance of the white men's farms, especially when new ground was broken, might have decreased the chances of epidemic. In this chapter will be told the earliest movements toward private enterprise, which McLoughlin found it necessary to control, and harmonize with the interests of his company. This was the greatest problem of the three that were found on his hands. His wisdom in attempting to handle with justice and humanity all the cases that came up, and at the same time not sacrifice the interest of his employers, was shown as the years went by. This, of course, led to the final struggle between British and American supremacy. In this chapter only the beginnings of the independent efforts which Mc-



Loughlin had to watch and keep under control can be named.

Opposition to settlement has been noted as the distinguishing feature of the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company. In beginning his account of this organization in the great collection known as the "Narrative and Critical History of North America," edited by Justin Winsor, of Harvard University, Geo. E. Ellis says:—"During the period to be reviewed, we have set before us a contrast of events, uses and experiences, as happening on the two respective halves of the continent—that which is under the jurisdiction of the United States, and that under the British crown—a contrast which in sum and detail may well astound us. On the lower side of the boundary line the whole scene has been of advance and enterprise; a steady, vigorous, pushing forward over mountain and plain, and valley; of tilled fields, of thriving settlements, of sumptuous cities, and of millions of toiling prosperous peoples. On the upper side a narrow, jealous, obstructive policy had shut out all intrusion on a wilderness by any but stealthy trappers and the desolate wintering agents of a monopoly in the peltry traffic."

Barrows has extended and amplified the same idea. Nothing very good of this company would be expected from W. H. Gray, who wrote very largely as the mortal enemy of the organization, but it is worth while to notice what impression was made by actual contact, not a theoretical, or historical study. He

names as the theme of his history, published in 1870, "The facts we have collected, the proofs we are able to give of the policy and practices of one of the most gigantic frauds ever continued for a series of years by one professedly Christian nation upon another, in chartering and continuing to license a monster monopoly; and the manner in which they have sought for a series of years to prevent American trade and settlement of the western portion of our country." Even Bancroft and Mrs. Victor, in whose pages the Northwesters are praised and their brave deeds narrated even to the exclusion of some less admirable passages, have no good word for the Hudson's Bay Company; as quoted heretofore, the former says that a monopoly has no object except exclusion of others who have a right to participate.

This object of the great fur company, however, has not been arrived at as a simple inference of rivals, or enemies, or the conclusion of the historian. In the collection referred to above it is said by William Frederick Poole, librarian of the Newberry Library, Chicago, in his sketch of the Northwest Territory (Ohio Valley, etc.):—"The purpose [of England] was to reserve as crown lands the Northwest Territory, the region north of the great lakes, and the country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi; and to exclude them from settlement by the American colonies." This was immediately upon the close of the French and Indian War, in 1763.

He takes this statement from the report of the Lord Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, in which the object of holding possessions in North America by England is thus bluntly, though guardedly, expressed. The commission says:

“ We take leave to remind your lordships of that principle which has been adopted by this board, and approved by and confirmed by his Majesty immediately after the treaty of Paris, viz. : The comprising of the western extent of settlement [in North America] to such a distance from the sea coast as that these settlements should lie within the reach of the trade and commerce of this kingdom; . . . and also of the exercise of that authority and jurisdiction which was conceived to be necessary for the promotion of the colonies in a due subordination to, and dependence upon the mother country; and this was apprehended to have been the capital object of his Majesty’s proclamation of the 7th of October, 1763. . . . The great object of colonization upon the continent of North America has been to improve and extend the commerce, navigation, and manufactures of this kingdom. . . . It does appear to us that the extension of the fur trade depends entirely upon the Indians being undisturbed in the possession of their hunting grounds, and that all colonizing does in its nature, and must in its consequences, operate to the prejudice of this branch of commerce. . . . Let the savages enjoy their deserts in quiet. Were they driven from the forests the peltry trade would



decrease; and it is not improbable that worse savages would take their place."

There could not be a clearer, yet more subtle, exposition of the purposes of those interested in employing North America chiefly as a fur trading country. North America was to exist for the benefit of the mother country; settlement was to be restricted so as not to be out of reach of England; the Indians were not to be driven from their forests. There was a double, or even triple appeal: the first and controlling one being to promote British trade; but a second, as an appeal for justice to sustain the Indians in their homes, is hinted at; and the third, that if the country were opened to settlement, worse savages than the Indians would take their place, and hence civilization would be retarded. As a matter of fact the American settler in his progress from the Atlantic to the Pacific was the one meant as that "worse savage."

The English, indeed, were persuaded to give up the Northwest Territory, after the War of the Revolution, and North America as far west as the Mississippi was opened to the American settler; Wellington, being appealed to by the British administration after the war of 1812, when England wished to assign lands to the Indians which the United States should neither take nor purchase, and the American commissioners refused any such restrictions, advised them soundly that no success in America would justify a war for such a purpose. The war of 1812

shifted the problem to the country between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains. For thirty years after the Treaty of Ghent the problem was in course of solution in the valley of the Columbia. England contended still that so much as possible of North America should be excluded from settlement, and subordinated to a special British privilege; while opposing forces were at work to secure the valley of the Columbia, and as the event has proved, the entire Pacific Coast, and the vast area of the Pacific Ocean, for the purposes of general civilization.

We of the later day may trace the feeble efforts at settlement without prejudice or bias of any kind. The struggle is now over, and the problem has been settled. Although able to consider the object of Great Britain, through the Hudson's Bay monopoly, in trying to restrain settlement, and to place metes and bounds to civilization, as only wrong and futile, and as embodying almost every element of mischief; and being compelled to think that the stubborn and successful effort to add the wealth of this quarter of North America to the available forces of civilization, both personally heroic and worthy, and in the true course of "destiny," we may still see the good that came to Oregon from the great monopoly, and acknowledge the value of a powerful and all but successful conservative influence in restricting the still stronger progressive influences. Growth, to be true and enduring, must be at that place where opposites almost overbalance, and any false or vicious move-

ment in the process of development is arrested, or cut off, before vitiating the entire body.

The first frail attachments to the soil of Oregon began with the coming of the Astor Company. In the preceding pages we have seen the progress of the Northwesters, and later of the combined British organizations under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, establishing posts, and occupying the country for purposes of trade, and the great success in this line attained by Dr. McLoughlin. It was supposed for a long time that in so doing Oregon was thoroughly fortified against settlement, and that the country was thoroughly instated in the occupancy of the Indians and of the employees of the British monopoly. But all this time there was going on a gradual process that was making pioneers and actual settlers of a number of the very men who were supposed to be holding the country against settlement. It is the object of this chapter to trace these hidden, and apparently trivial processes, showing that settlement and civilization belong to man's nature, rather than to any race or tribe; and that love of home and fireside cannot be overlooked either in shaping or accounting for events. Indeed Oregon herself, with her numberless fair valleys, her free wild mountains, her intractable but majestic rivers, and her climate, which, like some enchanting vixen which knows that she may do just as she pleases without losing her fascination, and does it, had much to do with making the men first sent here as servants



desire to make here a home, and become citizens. Much is owed to the Indians, especially to the Indian women. Among the latter were found many who were capable of so much fidelity and attachment that with a native woman to keep house and rear his children some even educated and intelligent men found that they could have a home, and give up the roving life, and cared no longer for going back to their native land.

One of the first whites to marry was W. W. Matthews, a clerk at Astoria, and from accounts given by Ross Cox, an active and energetic man. He chose as his wife a daughter of Kobaiway, the Clatsop chief mentioned by Lewis and Clark as Comowool; the young woman's name being Kilakotah. A daughter, Ellen Matthews, was born to them July 1, 1815. This is regarded as the first recorded birth of a child by a white parent; though, as indicated in preceding pages, there were undoubtedly a considerable number of such births in preceding years. Ellen was taken east and became the wife of a wealthy and well-connected man of Montreal. Matthews died in New York. Kilakotah then became the wife of Louis Labonte.

This Louis Labonte seems to have been a rare man. He is mentioned in Irving's *Astoria*, as continuing with Hunt in his almost desperate winter march out of the Snake River Valley; but as becoming exhausted and giving out in the Blue Mountains, and only being brought through by Hunt himself assisting him

along. Labonte was then a young man, of about twenty-three, according to the recollections of his son. He was born in Montreal, and when but a youth of eighteen engaged with a St. Louis fur company. In 1812 he took service with Hunt. He was at Astoria after the departure of Matthews, and married Kilakotah here. The oldest child, a son, who is still living, was born at the fort in 1818. After quitting Astoria Labonte took a term of six years again with the Hudson's Bay Company, spending the time at Colville and at Spokane. His service expired about the year 1828. Having a wife and family in Oregon, he desired to remain and make here an independent home. As remembered by his son this was not at first allowed. Indeed the rule was read that no servant could be discharged except in the country where the servant was employed. Labonte must be sent back to Montreal. Very well, reasoned Labonte; I was employed in Oregon; I will be discharged in Oregon.

The reasoning was perfect, but as the conclusion did not suit the purposes of the monopoly, his request was denied. He must go to Montreal for his discharge. He agreed to do this; he started in March, reached Montreal, received his papers certifying to his discharge, and immediately turning about came back to Oregon, arriving in November of the same year. He was now a free man, and could live where he pleased. Certainly there was a rule of the company that no British subjects, except em-

ployees of the monopoly, should live in the territory, but as we shall see later, Dr. McLoughlin found a way to evade this rule.

But in the meanwhile other of the employees, particularly of Hunt's men, had been following the same policy—apparently, however, not having been compelled to return to Montreal for their discharge. Joseph Gervais seems to have been the very first to make a home of his own, which was as early as 1828. Gervais had married the youngest daughter of the Clatsop chief; her name was Yaimast. Gervais selected a point on the Willamette River, about twelve miles above Champoeg, and as many below Salem. It was known by the Indian name of Chemayway. His house and barn, as the first settler's house of which we know, was built partly after the white man's and partly after the Indian style. It was of logs, hewed square; and of rather large size. The dimensions of the building were about 18 x 24 feet. There were two stories, the upper floor being of white fir puncheons. This was the American settler's style, and suggests that it was after a design, or perhaps with the help, of William Cannon, a millwright from Pennsylvania, also one of Hunt's men. But the roof was the Indian style. This was made of poles as rafters and covered with pieces of ash bark, laid imbricated as shingles and secured by poles laid along the courses. There was a fireplace, made of sticks tied together securely by buckskin thongs, and plastered over with the tough clay of the prairie



mixed with grass. There were three windows on the lower floor, each being about 30 x 36 inches, and in lieu of glass was used fine buckskin hide, dressed very thin, which allowed the entrance of a pale yellow light. The great fireplace, however, poured out its cheerful rays with its warmth, and the door almost always stood open. The barn was a considerable building, being about 40 x 50 feet, ground measure. A style of architecture, which seems peculiar to French Prairie in the early day, was employed in its construction. Into the posts set at the corners and other convenient places, grooves were cut; and into the grooves large split planks were let, making the walls. This seems to be an adaptation of Indian architecture, which employed grooves largely in joining timbers, being deficient in iron for nails or fastenings. The roof was of poles and bark.

Another one of Hunt's men, Etienne Lucier, who took an important part later in formation of the Provisional Government, came about the same time to Chemaway, and found a home at Chewewa, some

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Willard H. Rees, writing in 1879 of the settlement of French Prairie, says: "Here were the homes of Gervais, Lucier, Cannon, Jack, and on the west side of the river, Labonte and Laframboise—four Canadians and two American citizens, all Astor men, who came to Oregon with Captain Wilson P. Hunt, in 1812, some of whom were with McKinze (McKenzie) when this part of the territory was explored by white men; and in later years, with the exception of Laframboise, these five free trappers were the first to introduce the civilizing arts of husbandry in the Valley of the Willamette."

Again he says: "There is a discrepancy of statements with regard

nine miles down the river from Gervais'. Lucier is often spoken of as the first to locate a claim. He is said to have selected a place on the east side of the Willamette near the present site of Portland, in 1829, but was informed by Dr. McLoughlin

to date of commencing the French Prairie settlement. Permit me to give in corroboration of what I learned from Dr. McLoughlin and the settlers themselves, the proof fixing the date by men yet living. The venerable Donald Manson, who arrived at Vancouver Jan., 1825, now a resident of Champoege, says: 'I married Felicite, the eldest daughter of Etienne Lucier, in October, 1828. Her father was then living on his land claim two miles above Champoege, where he had settled in the fall of 1827.' Hon. F. X. Matthieu, residing near Butteville, who came to Oregon in 1842, says: 'On my arrival in Oregon I lived the following two years with Mr. Lucier, who told me he had lived on his farm fifteen years when I reached his home in 1842.'"

As to the first exploration of the Willamette Valley, which probably led to the desire to make here their home, Mr. Rees says: "In the fall following the arrival of Mr. Hunt at Astoria, Mr. McKenzie, one of the Astor partners who with so much pomp took for his wife the Princess Chowa, daughter of old king Comcomley, the celebrated Chinook chief—[probably allusion to McDougall's marriage]—left Astoria on an exploring expedition to the Willamette Valley country. Among the small party who accompanied him were Joseph Gervais, Louis Labonte, and a brother of Comcomley, his large canoe being manned by his slaves. This expedition, said Joseph Gervais, was for the purpose of establishing trade with the Indians, to instruct and encourage them to capture and properly preserve the skins of such fur bearing animals as the company most desired. The explorers proceeded as far south as the Calapooia country. They found the natives very numerous and friendly. Their principal towns were confined to the rivers, where they kept large fleets of canoes. Champoege was the largest village they found on the upper river, their cedar houses occupying both banks of the stream. The Indians were all pressed, or flat, heads, except their slaves, who were owned by the principal men generally."

Mr. Rees states that Gervais and the other Astor men, refused,

that he had himself decided to take the place, and in consequence came up the river to Chemayway,

after the transfer to the British company, to take service, but continued their occupation as free trappers; saying: "After the transfer of the Astor company's interest to the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal, Canada, which took place in October, 1813, during our late war with Great Britain, some of the Astor men, who were mostly Canadians, refused to enter the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, preferring to become what was known on the Atlantic side as Free Trappers, which position they ever afterwards maintained. In the time intervening between the transfer just mentioned and the date when the free trappers commenced locating land on French Prairie, they had made what they termed many seasons of profitable trapping and hunting throughout the valley and the bordering mountain ranges. About the time the union between the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company was consummated, 1821-2, Gervais and their families, as was the custom, were trapping on the Hons-u-cha-chac [Han-te-uc], which was the Indian name of Pudding River, their camp being near its junction with the Willamette; while here they experienced severe weather with a snow storm, which confined them to their lodges until compelled to go forth in search of game. The little prairie on Pudding River, where the Indian trail crossed the stream, was but a short distance above their camp. Here they came upon a herd of elk, some of which they succeeded in shooting. The Indian women hearing the firing and suspecting what was going on, started with their knives and vessels to assist their liege lords of the chase. They succeeded in saving the blood, which was soon made into the favorite French dish known as blood pudding, upon which, with their elk meat, they fared sumptuously every day during the continuance of the inclement weather. While this memorable feast was being enjoyed Gervais and Lucier christened the stream Riviere au Boudain, or Pudding River." [Another account makes Thomas McKay the chief actor in the Pudding incident.]

Rees continues: "In the time between the fall of 1827 and 1830 all the free trappers had selected locations at French Prairie, as had also some of the old retired men of the Northwest Company. The first men retired from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company by Dr. McLoughlin, commenced settling at French Prairie in the fall of 1830."



and lived with Gervais until he occupied his own place.

William Cannon was a millwright, and was found useful as a mechanic at Vancouver, when McLoughlin decided to build the mill. Alexander Carson was among the number left by Hunt on the Snake to trap, and is mentioned occasionally in the old journals. He was evidently a very active and restless sort of a person, wandering hither and thither, hardly bearing to be in the company of white men. From the little French Prairie settlement he went to the North Yamhill country, where he was killed by a band of Tualatin Indians, on the beautiful hill—Alec's Butte—that now bears his name.

As early therefore as 1830 actual settlement of the Willamette Valley was begun. This was apparently without permission, and without any object except that a number of Americans, or Canadians whose instincts to hold land and have a home of their own was the same, decided that they would no longer rove, but live comfortably during their later years in the valley that was renowned as the gourmand's paradise, and the region of abundance. This was, of course, under the shadow of the Hudson's Bay Com-

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Mr. Rees gives the names of a number of the early settlers of French Prairie, as furnished by the Parish Register at St. Paul, Or. William Cannon, born in Penn. 1755, dying in 1854; Etienne Lucier, dying March, 1853; Louis Labonte, dying in 1860; Joseph Gervais, dying in 1861. He mentions Philip Degie, who was born at Sorel, Canada, in 1739, and states that he crossed the continent with Lewis

pany, and there would seem to have been little difficulty in preventing the settlement. It was perhaps a matter of some doubt whether these men were to be treated as British subjects and sent out of the country. Carson and Cannon were certainly Americans, and perhaps were well enough informed of the treaty of joint occupancy to claim the right to remain in Oregon if they chose. But they could undoubtedly have been made obnoxious and thus have been constrained to depart if such a course had seemed most desirable.

But not only was the spirit of settlement and a desire for home found among these free trappers, or remnants of the Astor Company, but it existed very strongly all the way up the scale of the company's organization in Oregon. The Chief Factor, McLoughlin himself, early became a pioneer of settlement. Nothing is more interesting, or more significant, than to follow his careful steps to provide for just that thing that his company most feared—colonization. Conscientious and careful as he was with the business of his employers, and great as was the wealth of the peltries that he annually shipped to them at London, he was silently and almost stealthily teaching his factors and servants how to quit trapping and

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and Clark, and reached the astonishing age of 108 years. This would be an interesting case for more exact examination.

With regard to Labonte, it seems, according to the recollections of his son, that he was not a free trapper, at least all the time; and was obliged to get his discharge at Montreal.

how to make homes, and that here where they were, with their own families, was the place to quit. He was in point of fact one of those men whose ideas and sympathies were too large to be confined to one groove. He was acting at length under two sets of motives, which he believed for a long time were not irreconcilable. He wished to, and did, do well for his employers, turning over to them wealth by the millions; but with that his life could not be satisfied. He wished to see, and himself to be active in, planting civilization in a land which he considered best suited of any that he had ever known, to man's home and industry.

He has left two accounts of his course in Oregon: one intended to justify himself as an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, and showing that his method was best calculated to serve their interest; and the other showing what he accomplished for the settlement of Oregon, and justifying his claim to a donation claim as an Oregon pioneer. Both documents are of extreme interest. From the latter we shall now present the facts which show what the Chief Factor himself was doing to bring about ultimate settlement of Oregon, while the free trappers were looking out homes and erecting permanent buildings.

Upon his first arrival in Oregon, in 1824, McLoughlin noted among other reasons for change of the site of the principal post from Astoria, that a location where supplies could be raised was preferable. He says:—"In 1824 I came to this country to



superintend the management of the Hudson's Bay Company's trade on this coast, and we came to the conclusion to abandon Astoria and go to Fort Vancouver, as it was a place where we could cultivate the soil and raise our own provisions. In March, 1825, we moved there, and that spring planted potatoes and sowed two bushels of peas, the only grain we had, and all we had." Here was the spirit of the cultivator of the soil; the benefactor of that practical kind who considers it a good deed "to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before." It is not known precisely when this document was written; but evidently—as shown by one point—after he had left Vancouver and was living at Oregon City, as he refers to Vancouver as "there."

The next year, however, was far more important for the agriculture of Oregon. Besides potatoes and peas, which was all the productions that the indifferent Northwesters seem to have developed in ten years in the territory, he had seed wheat, oats, barley, Indian corn, and timothy to plant.

He says:—"In the fall (of 1825) I received from York Factory a bushel spring wheat, a bushel oats, a bushel barley, a bushel Indian corn, and a quart of timothy; and all of which was sown in proper time, and which produced well, except the Indian corn, for which the ground was too poor and the nights too cool; and continued our improvement." His object up to this time was simply to supply the people at the fort, and their brigade of men, with fresh and

suitable provisions. But it was done in the true spirit of the agriculturist. It seems singular that even the seed wheat would have been allowed from conservative York Factory; undoubtedly the wheat and other grains were sent simply because he ordered them. By 1828 this first object was realized. "The crop was sufficient to enable us to dispense with the importation of flour, etc."

But a single season, however, sufficed to show McLoughlin that Oregon was not a country for the savage only, or to be forever a wilderness. He says:—"In 1825, from what I had seen of the country I formed the conclusion, from the mildness and salubrity of the climate, that this was the finest portion of North America that I had seen for the residence of civilized man." This is a remarkable passage; a modern Oregon real estate dealer might have written it, and it bears a wonderful contrast to the complaints, or the turgid descriptions, found in the pages of almost all the explorers and traders of the time, who almost invariably magnified the discomforts and dangers, and made Oregon seem as a howling wilderness. But here was a lover of Oregon from the first, and a believer in her destiny as the home of civilized men.

For the purpose of making such residence easier he thought of another asset at the fort. A few cows for milk, with the expectation that the calves that came would be kept for beef, or used as veal, were allowed the gentlemen at the Hudson's Bay posts.

These were sent out to Fort Vancouver. The question then arose with the doctor: should he eat beef, or save the cattle for the coming settlement? He decided to forego eating beef, and save the calves. He says:—"As the farmers could not cultivate the ground without cattle, and as the Hudson's Bay Company had only 27 head [at Vaucouver], big and small, and as I saw at that time no possibility of getting cattle by sea, and that was too expensive, I determined that no cattle should be killed at Vancouver, except one bull calf every year for rennet to make cheese, until we had an ample stock to meet all demands, and to assist settlers—A resolution to which I strictly adhered, and the first animal killed for beef was in 1838. Till that time we lived on fresh and salt venison and wild fowl." This resolution of the doctor's was assailed by many of the British ship captains, who wished to provision their ships from the precious herd on Sauvie's Island, but even Belcher, who stormed and swore, was not allowed to touch a single head.

McLoughlin seems to recognize that the initiative toward actual settlement was taken by the trappers of the Willamette Valley; but he encouraged this determination, and made settlement possible from the course he had already taken in providing wheat and cattle at the fort. He says:—"In 1828 Etienne Lucier, a Willamette trapper, asked me if I thought this would become a settled country. I told him wherever wheat grew he might depend it would be-



come a farming country. He asked me what assistance I would afford him to settle as a farmer. I told him I would loan him seed to sow and wheat to feed himself and family, to be returned from the produce of his farm; and to sell him such implements as were in the Hudson's Bay Company's store at fifty per cent. of the prime cost." But after thinking it over Lucier decided that the prospect of this ever becoming a civilized country was so remote that it would not do to wait for it. There was no clergyman in the country, and he seems to have dreaded the idea of making his permanent home where he could not die confessed and his body be buried in consecrated ground. He therefore came back in a few days and asked for a passage to Canada. But as luck, or the fortune of Oregon—for on Lucier much history afterward depended—would have it, although the request was granted, the express was gone, and he returned and went hunting for the winter.

The idea of a home in the Willamette Valley seems to have taken hold of him again, and remembering the help that McLoughlin promised, he returned to Vancouver with his former request. McLoughlin had also had time to consider the project, and saw that others of the trappers—probably Gervais and the old Astor men—would probably wish the same accommodation. He therefore laid out a regular policy which he might pursue. Even at that early moment it appeared as a matter of large importance, and involved questions of a delicate nature. There

was first the direct rule of his company that all servants must be discharged at their home, and not in the trapping country. There was second the political complication. McLoughlin understood in 1825 that Great Britain would not claim south of the Columbia River [though undoubtedly controlling the mouth of the Columbia]. His manner of treating these questions is described in his own words as follows:—  
“ In 1829 he (Lucier) again applied to begin to farm. I told him that since he had spoken to me I had heard that several of the trappers would apply for assistance to begin to farm, and that it was necessary for me to come to a distinct understanding with him to serve as a rule for those who might follow. The Hudson’s Bay Company were bound under heavy penalties to discharge none of their servants in the Indian country, and bound to return them to the place where they engaged them. That this was done to prevent vagabonds being let loose among the Indians, and incite them to hostility to the whites. But as I knew that he was a good honest man, and none but such need apply, and as, if he went to Canada and should unfortunately die before his children could provide for themselves, they would become objects of pity, and burthen to others—for these reasons I would assist him to settle. But I must keep him and all the Hudson’s Bay Company’s servants whom I allowed to settle, on the Hudson’s Bay Company’s books as servants, so as not to expose the Hudson’s Bay Company and me to a fine; but they could work

for themselves and no service would be exacted from them.”

As to the question of the ownership of the Willamette Valley the subject was very delicate. It is also very doubtful precisely what were the feelings and ideas of McLoughlin. There was the probability that the Willamette Valley would go to the Americans; but if it were made the settlement of retired Hudson's Bay servants, and American occupation was very tardy, as it then promised to be, this valley, commanding all Oregon, would become practically a dependency upon Fort Vancouver, and in any event the occupation of country south of the Columbia would not injure the British claims; and the spirit of the instructions to discharge no servants in the Indian country would be preserved—the Willamette Valley really becoming a foreign settlement, though easily kept in commercial subjection to the company's posts. McLoughlin thus treated this problem. He says:—“ Many of the Canadians objected to go to the Willamette Valley, because it was to become American territory—which I told them it would, as the Hudson's Bay Company in 1825 officially informed me that in no event could the British Government claim south of the Columbia; and they were afraid they would not have the same advantages as the American citizens. I told them—from the fertility of the soil, the extent of prairie, and the easy access from the sea, that the Willamette (they must admit) was the best and only place adapted to form



a settlement; which would have a beneficial effect on the whole country north of San Francisco; where we could also assist and protect them from the Indians if necessary in case of difficulty; and as to [political] advantages I did not know what they would have, but this I knew, that the American Government and people knew only two classes of persons, rogues and honest men; that they punished the first and protected the last, and it depended on themselves to which class they would belong." This last sentence, which is an admirable statement of the true and original American idea of class distinctions, or lack of all distinctions except of good and bad, shows the Republican sympathies of the Chief Factor.

Still another question arose when the idea of settlement came up—whether to confine all settlement to one place, or to allow individuals to go where they would, and perhaps lay claim to immense tracts of land—by marrying a chief's daughter, it might be, and then claiming under American title all that the chief claimed as the representative of the tribe. The women that the old trappers had actually married were from widely scattered tribes, all the way from Chinook to the Nez Perces and Snake country, and Spokane, and farther north. The advice that he gave them on this point was as follows:—"Others wanted to go and live with the relatives of their wives, but as their children would be brought up with the sympathies and feelings of Indians, and as the half-breeds are in general leaders among Indians, and they would

be a thorn in the side of the whites, I insisted they should go to the Willamette, where their children could be brought up as whites and as Christians, and brought to cultivate the ground, and (be) imbued with the feelings and sympathies of whites, and where they and their mothers would serve as hostages for the good behavior of their relatives in the interior." This latter seemed to McLoughlin as a very important point in the government of the country. Not many small scattered settlements, but one compact and tolerably strong settlement, should be formed; since there was to be a settlement. Single settlers, or a few in many places, he always looked upon as disturbers of the Indians and a source of great danger to the general peace. He decided, therefore, that no retired servants should be allowed among the scattered tribes; all must be in the one neighborhood. One of the reasons he gives is as follows:

"As Indians judge of whites by themselves, and think if they injure whites on their lands the whites would revenge it by murdering their Indian relatives among them; and as the settlement increased by the addition of Indian women and half-breeds, the turbulence of the Indian tribes would diminish." He saw the justification of this in the outcome of the Cayuse war, saying, "Certainly the Cayuse war would not have been quelled [concluded] so easily as it was if the half-breeds had not joined the Americans."

In the personal history and development of Mc-

Loughlin himself this French Prairie settlement was possibly the dearest of any of his many enterprises. It throws a remarkable light upon the character of the man to notice in what order he carried out his purposes. His first concern, which was his concern and his duty as a servant, was to conduct the business of his employers. His next, but evidently nearer his affections, was to settle and properly take care of the old employees of his company. For their wives and children, who although of native blood, had their rights and had a proper claim upon their white fathers for provision and protection, he had the utmost solicitude. This is shown in a quotation already made, and it is also reported by those who knew him personally. Rev. J. S. Griffin, who was a strong and almost bitter antagonist of McLoughlin's, has said to the writer that the Chief Factor justified the retention of the old servants in the country chiefly on the grounds of humanity. "Unfortunately," he would say, "these men have contracted marriages with native women, and have families which cannot be abandoned." It was not until after he had made provision for his old servants and had set them up in homes of their own, and had given them a business that would support themselves and their families that he took steps to provide for his own old age.

After having decided that he could keep the retired servants in the country, and although not exacting any service from them, still hold their names on



his books, the question arose upon what conditions the privilege of settlement upon land might be arranged. They were still servants in fact as well as name, and any terms that he might impose must be accepted, or else—in case of all unless the free trappers of the old Astor party—they must go back to Canada. There were two principal advances to be made, one of tools and implements, and the other of cattle. It was to be decided also who of the employees wishing to retire should be allowed to take land. He decided that only to those having at least fifty pounds ahead, should settlement be permitted. As to a supply of cattle, these were to be loaned, not sold; and the increase was to belong to the company. Whether it ever occurred to McLoughlin that he was using Hudson's Bay property to establish a settlement that was destined to break up the Hudson's Bay Company in Oregon, does not appear. But if it did he assumed the responsibility, and was quite as autocratic with the cows and seed wheat of that venerable organization as with the manner in which he made terms with the old servants. He was in fact assuming such powers as we associate with Alfred or Frederick, or any absolute ruler. His reasons for thus assigning property and making the restrictions are given below; they were certainly perfectly adapted to the situation, and we shall find growing out of them most interesting social conditions.

He says:—"I made it a rule that none of the Hudson's Bay Company servants should be allowed to

join the settlement unless he had fifty pounds sterling before him, as he required that sum to supply him with clothing and implements. He that begins business on credit is seldom so careful and industrious as he that does business on his own means. By this I effected two objects: I made the men more saving and industrious and attached them to their farms. If I had not done so they would have abandoned on the least difficulty; but having their means invested in the improvements they saw if they abandoned the loss would be theirs; they therefore persisted and succeeded. When the settlement was formed, though the American trappers had no means, they were assisted on credit, and all in three years paid up from the produce of their farms."

Precisely to whom McLoughlin refers as "the American trappers," here, does not seem clear; but as it was "when the settlement was formed," it can scarcely be other than Cannon and Carson, and perhaps Gervais, Lucier, Labonte, Dubruy, and Jack. If this were so he thus recognizes that there was a difference to be observed between the first little corps of settlers at Chemayway, who, perhaps as early as 1827, had selected places, if they were actually living on them; and the Canadians. Whether Lucier and Gervais and the others allowed their names to go on the books as servants of the company could probably only be shown by reference to those books. As Labonte obtained his discharge from Montreal it is scarcely probable that he re-

entered his name; and as he made his settlement on the west side of the river, near the mouth of the Yamhill, this is all the more likely. Thus it would seem that at that early time there was a still noticeable independent element in the young colony, but so small compared with the much larger number of actual Hudson's Bay servants, that they formed no exception to the rules that McLoughlin adopted and enforced. They were debtors to, if not servants of, the company, and were thus easily brought to observe the rules laid down for the servants.

As to the policy with the cattle McLoughlin says:—"Every settler had as much wheat as he wanted to begin with, and I lent them each two cows, as in 1825 we had only 27 head, big and small, old and young. If I sold, they would of course be entitled to the increase, and I would not have the means to assist the new settlers, and the settlement would be retarded, as those purchasers who offered me two hundred dollars a head for a cow would put such a price on the increase as would put it out of the power of the poor settlers to buy. This would prevent industrious men settling. For these reasons I would not sell, but loaned, as I say, two cows to each settler, and in case the increase of settlers might be greater than we could afford to supply with cattle, I reserved the right to take any cattle (above his two cows) from any settler to assist a new settler."

For the growth and prosperity of the settlement, which McLoughlin, although autocrat and father,



was trying to direct as nearly as possible along natural lines, still another element was necessary; this was a market for produce. He saw here a chance to combine advantageously the interests of his fur company and that of the settlement. The Russians of Alaska were considerable consumers of breadstuffs and had been supplied ever since the days of the Astoria settlement by American or English ships. McLoughlin now negotiated an arrangement with the governor at Sitka to supply him with Oregon flour. This at once created a demand for as much wheat as the settlement could produce, and called also for a gristmill. Wheat thus became the staple production. McLoughlin also saw here the opportunity to lay the foundations of a private business and fortune, and did not hesitate to avail himself of it, though it was not until long afterward that he could make use of the chance. This was to lay claim in his own right to the site of the Willamette Falls, and gradually build here a city, and enter into manufacture of flour. He laid the claim in 1829, and cut timbers to make the foundations of a house, which, according to the custom, was a declaration of intention, and was regarded as sufficient to hold the claim.

Owing to this Russian contract, which brought the company more and better furs than the whole Willamette Valley, probably, could afford as a game preserve, wheat became the staple crop, and was made the currency. It was reckoned at eighty cents a bushel, and upon delivery to a Hudson's Bay ware-

house a certificate was given, which was receivable for its full value at the company's store, at Vancouver, or later at Oregon City, for any goods on hand. This made a complete circuit of value. Thus we see exemplified in this little settlement, established first from reluctance of a few free trappers to abandon their native wives and their children, and the necessity for making homes if they remained, the first principles of economics. The steps were: Marriage, which though rude was true and faithful, no ceremony perhaps being performed, but the wives and husbands being attached and devoted; then the family gathering until the trapper could no longer wander after furs, and desired a permanent stopping place; then the home, the house being built half Canadian or American, and half Indian, but still comfortable; then the necessity of raising something, as the man dwelling in a fixed abode must cultivate the ground; but in order to cultivate the soil the need of cattle, or stock of some kind, and the supply; which in this case did not come from the very slow process of domesticating wild animals *de novo*, but was from the social accumulation of past times, and was afforded from the benevolence of one of the industrial administrators of the social accumulation. The same also of the seed wheat and other seed. Then, after the production was made, the need, in order to make the special production serve the needs of home life, of exchange, which was supplied through the energy of McLoughlin as a part of his

fur trade. Then, after the exchange was effected, the need of a medium of general exchange, by which any commodity could be obtained for a particular article. This need was met by making the most universal and abundant article the medium of exchange, and a simple certificate representing that article was made the "evidence of debt," or money. Nowhere is there a more simple and transparent illustration of primary economics. It is all the more so as every step was taken without the slightest reference to theoretical considerations but to meet simple human wants as they arose.

It is evident, however, that this settlement was not a birth, but an embryo; it was limited in every way by the conception of its parent, and its entire life depended upon his rules and will. Wise and generous as were the rules of McLoughlin, the principle of independence was nowhere recognized. Indeed, independence was strictly guarded against. In the first place the settlers were still servants of the company, and although not compelled to render service, their movements and location were strictly determined by the Chief Factor. In the second place a certain sum was required to be on hand before any one would be allowed to join the settlement, and thus a loss was to be inflicted as a penalty if any abandoned his claim. Each was to a certain degree in fee to the company. Again, for seed, and especially for cattle, each was bound to the company. The very thing upon which each must depend for his living was not his own property, but that of another. The



cattle and their increase were not for the cultivator but for the landlord. The settlers were given a good reason for keeping and taking care of the live stock, because without them they could raise nothing; but were still only herdsmen for the monopoly. Finally their only valuable product, wheat, was subject to the arbitrary price of the monopoly, and money, whose value was based upon wheat, was good only at the stores of the same company. It is not to be inferred that McLoughlin did not allow a fair price for wheat, nor that an extortionate price for goods was asked at his company's stores; but the circuit of exchange and the value of the circulating medium were entirely within the limits of his judgment. There was no recourse beyond him, and no way of obtaining better results from their efforts than he was willing or able to give. As a matter of fact all the settlers had the most absolute confidence in his justice, and that he was treating them with most scrupulous consideration, and nothing was dearer to him than the happiness and growth of the settlement; McLoughlin was loved and honored as a father, and few of the Canadians on French Prairie could find reason for any change in relations. Yet it is evident from the conditions imposed, and that the entire economic life was strictly limited to one superior will, that thus provision was already made for a struggle to reach entirely free conditions; where the limitations should be only those of nature. The embryo, in order to live, must at last free itself even from its mother.













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